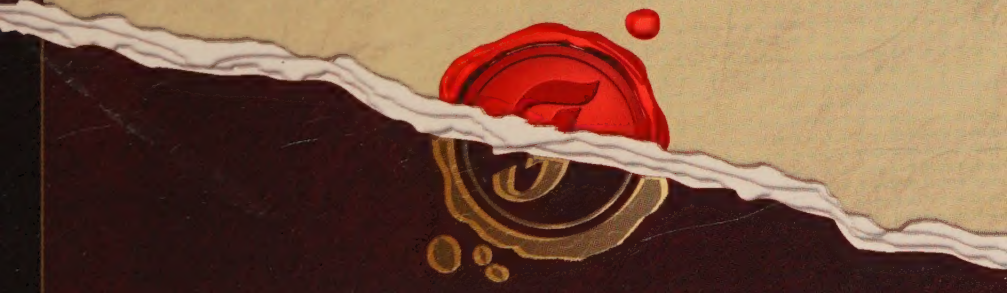
CLASSIC REPRINT SERIES

The Book of Judges

In the Revised Version With Introduction and Notes



by

G. A. Cooke

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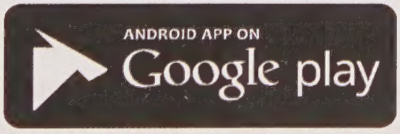
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THE BOOK OF JUDGES

in the Revised Version

with introduction and notes

by

G. A. COOKE, D.D.

Hon. D.D., Edin.; Oriel Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture, Oxford, and Canon of Rochester; Hon. Canon of St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh

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PREFACE

BY THE

GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE present General Editor for the Old Testament in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges desires to say that, in accordance with the policy of his predecessor the Bishop of Worcester, he does not hold himself responsible for the particular interpretations adopted or for the opinions expressed by the editors of the several Books, nor has he endeavoured to bring them into agreement with one another. It is inevitable that there should be differences of opinion in regard to many questions of criticism and interpretation, and it seems best that these differences should find free expression in different volumes. He has endeavoured to secure, as far as possible, that the general scope and character of the series should be observed, and that views which have a reasonable claim to consideration should not be ignored, but he has felt it best that the final responsibility should, in general, rest with the individual contributors.

A. F. KIRKPATRICK.

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LIST OF PRINCIPAL ABBREVIATIONS

Ber. Rab.	The Midrash Rabbah, *Bereshith* (Genesis).
Bertheau	E. Bertheau, *Das Buch der Richter und Ruth*, 2nd edn., 1883.
Budde	K. Budde, *Das Buch der Richter*, 1897, in Marti's Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament.
Buhl	F. Buhl, *Geographie des Alten Palästina*, 1896.
CIS	*Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum.*
COT.[2]	E. Schrader, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament*, 2nd edn., 1885.
D	Deuteronomy (7th cent. B.C.) and Deuteronomist.
Driver, *Introd.*[8]	S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, 8th edn., 1909.
Driver, *Schweich Lectures.*	S. R. Driver, *Modern Research as illustrating the Bible*, 1909. The Schweich Lectures for 1908.
E	Elohist, Hexateuchal source, written probably in the Northern Kingdom, 9th—8th cent. B.C.
Encycl. Bibl.	*Encyclopaedia Biblica*, edited by T. K. Cheyne and J. Sutherland Black, 4 vols., 1899—1903.
EV.	English Version or Versions (AV. and RV.).
HDB. or *DB.*	Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, 5 vols., 1898—1904.
J	Jehovist, Hexateuchal source, written probably in Judah, 9th cent. B.C.
KAT.[3]	*Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*, 3rd edn., 1903, by H. Zimmern and H. Winckler.
KB.	E. Schrader, *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek* (transliterations and translations of Babylonian and Assyrian texts, by various scholars), 6 vols., 1889—1900.

Kimhi	The commentary of David Ḳimḥi of Narbonne (A.D. 1160—1235), printed in Rabbinic Bibles.
Lagrange	M.-J. Łagrange, *Le Livre des Juges*, 1903.
LXX.	The Septuagint in Swete's edition, *The Old Testament in Greek*, vol. i., 1887. (3rd edn., 1901.)
LXX. cod. B LXX. MSS. LXX. cod. A	Two Greek versions of Judges exist; the one represented by codex B (Vaticanus) and a considerable group of cursives designated N by Moore; the other represented by codex A (Alexandrinus) and the majority of MSS. both uncial and cursive. Codex B is printed as the text of Swete's edition, with the readings of codex A below; the latter has been edited separately by Brooke and McLean, 1897.
LXX. Luc. LXX. MSS.	Among the cursive MSS. which belong to the version represented by codex A is a group which furnishes the text published by Lagarde, *Librorum Veteris Testamenti Canonicorum pars prior*, 1883, and is thought to give the recension of Lucian. Another set of cursives, belonging also to the version of codex A, forms a second group, designated M by Moore.
Moore	George F. Moore, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Judges*, in the International Critical Commentary series, 1895. Also *Judges* in the Polychrome Bible, English translation and notes, 1898; Hebrew Text and critical notes, 1900.
Nowack	W. Nowack, *Richter und Ruth*, 1900, in Nowack's Handkommentar zum Alten Testament.
NSI.	G. A. Cooke, *A Text-book of North-Semitic Inscriptions*, 1903.
Onom. or *OS.*	Paul de Lagarde, *Onomastica Sacra*, 1870; written in Greek by Eusebius, and translated into Latin by Jerome. This edition is cited by pages and lines.
OTJC.[2]	W. Robertson Smith, *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, 2nd edn., 1892.
Pesh. or Syr.	Peshiṭṭo, the Syriac Version of the Bible.

Rashi	The commentary of R(abbi) Sh(ĕlōmoh) Y(iṣḥāḳi) of Troyes, A.D. 1040—1105, printed in Rabbinic Bibles.
RD	The Deuteronomic Redactor.
RVm	The Revised Version marginal notes.
Syro-Hex.	The Syriac version, ascribed to Paul of Tella, of the Septuagint column in Origen's Hexapla, representing the Hexaplaric LXX. as it was read at Alexandria in the beginning of the 7th cent. A.D.
Vulg.	Vulgate, Jerome's Latin Version of the Bible.
ZDPV.	*Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palaestina-Vereins.*

A small 'superior' figure attached to the title of a book (e.g. *Introd.*[8]) indicates the *edition* of the work referred to.

In citations, e.g. Jud. ii. 1 b, 5 a, the letters a, b (sometimes c, d) denote respectively the first and second (or third and fourth) parts of the verse cited.

The citations always refer to the English Version; occasionally, where the Hebrew numbering differs from the English, attention is called to the fact.

In the transliteration of Hebrew and Arabic words or proper names the following equivalents are used: ʾ = א; ʿ = ע; *gh* = غ; ḥ = ח, ح; *kh* (in Arabic words) = خ; *dh* = ذ; ḳ = ק, ق; s = צ, ص; t = ט, ط.

INTRODUCTION

§ 1. Name and Contents

In the Hebrew Bible the Book of Judges (*shōphĕṭim*) stands second in the division of the Former Prophets, between Joshua and Samuel. In the Greek Bible, followed by the Vulgate and English Versions, it holds the same position, but Ruth comes immediately after it, because the scene of the story is laid in the time of the Judges. The title is probably taken from ii. 16—19, a passage which sums up the characteristics of the period covered by the Book, and describes the *judges* as men raised up by God to save Israel in the days of calamity and humiliation which invariably succeeded each act of national apostasy. The word is used in a special sense of the heroes of this age. The *judge* was not a magistrate, but a *deliverer* and *ruler*: when he had delivered his people he ruled them for the rest of his life; his authority extended over the whole nation; he was a king in all but the name and the right to transmit his office; and he formed one of a succession lasting from Othniel and Ehud to Eli and Samuel[1].

[1] The following references to this period illustrate the usage: for *judges* in the special sense mentioned above see Jud. ii. 16—19, Ruth i. 1, 2 Sam. vii. 11, 2 Kings xxiii. 22, 1 Chr. xvii. 6, 10; for *judge* in the sense of *deliver* (lit. *vindicate* the honour, or *establish the right*, of the oppressed), Jud. ii. 16, 18, iii. 10, iv. 4 *n.*, 1 Sam. vii. 6, viii. 20; for *judge* in the sense of *rule*, followed by a note of the duration of the rule, and implying an authority over all Israel, Jud. x. 2, 3, xii. 7—14, xv. 20, xvi. 31, 1 Sam. iv. 18; for *judge* in the sense of *magistrate*, Jud. iv. 4 *n.*, 1 Sam. vii. 15—17, viii. 1, 2. All these functions were

Now this representation of the Judges is due, not to the ancient sources preserved in the Book, but to the later historian who collected and interpreted them. From the older sources we learn that the heroes of the period, so far from exercising authority over all Israel and fighting battles on a national scale, were rather local leaders who won a victory for their particular district with such forces as they could muster. Israel had not yet outgrown the tribal stage, and a nation of Israel did not yet exist; but some kind of leadership was needed in a time of incessant conflict. It was the prowess and faith of the tribal heroes which saved the Hebrew colonies from being overwhelmed by the native population, and the way was thus prepared for the growth of a national life organized under a central authority. Whether or not the name of *judge* was derived by the compiler from tradition we do not know; in xi. 6 Jephthah is invited to become not a judge but a *chief* (*ḳāṣîn*); at any rate the title of our Book is derived from a conception of the history which is not borne out by the older documents. Nevertheless, the title conveniently suggests the transitional character of the period, and the position which its leaders filled.

The Book falls naturally into three parts:

Part i. Ch. i. 1—ii. 5. A Preface designed to explain the state of affairs at the time when the history begins.

Part ii. Ch. ii. 6—xvi. 31. The History of the Judges.

1. Ch. ii. 7—iii. 6. An Introduction to this, the main body of the Book, shewing the principles which it is to illustrate.
2. Ch. iii. 7—11. Othniel delivers Israel from Cushan-rishathaim.
3. Ch. iii. 12—30. Ehud delivers Israel from the Moabites.

assumed later by the king, 1 Sam. viii. 5, 6, 20, cf. Hos. xiii. 10, Is. xi. 3, 4. The word is a very ancient one, and is found in Babylonian, *shapâṭu*=to judge, *shipṭu*=judgement, punishment, e.g. *KB.* vi. pp. 72, 387; see also *KAT.*[3], pp. 647, 650. For the word as used in Phoenician see on ii. 16.

4. Chs. iv. and v. Deborah and Barak deliver Israel from the Canaanites. The Song of Deborah.
5. Chs. vi.—viii. Gideon delivers Israel from the Midianites.
6. Ch. ix. Abimelech and the men of Shechem. Jotham's fable.
7. Ch. x. 1—5. Two Judges, Tola and Jair.
8. Ch. x. 6—xii. 7. Jephthah delivers Israel from the Ammonites.
9. Ch. xii. 8—15. Three Judges, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon.
10. Chs. xiii.—xvi. Samson and his exploits against the Philistines.

Part iii. Chs. xvii.—xxi. An Appendix of sundry tribal traditions.

1. Chs. xvii. and xviii. The origin of the sanctuary at Dan.
2. Chs. xix.—xxi. The outrage at Gibeah and the punishment of the Benjamites.

§ 2. Sources and Literary Structure

A. *The Deuteronomic Redaction.* The Book of Judges, like the Hexateuch and the Historical Books, is not the work of a single writer, but a compilation drawn from various sources of various dates; and for the understanding of the Book it is important to distinguish the compiler's own contributions from the earlier documents which he has incorporated. We start, then, with the compiler. He is responsible for the main body of the Book, chs. ii. 6—xvi. 31, and he has constructed it upon a definite plan. The stories of the six Greater Judges, Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, are fitted into a framework which is marked by certain stereotyped expressions, enforcing a particular theory of the religion and chronology of the period. The theory is stated in ii. 11—19: the age of the Judges can shew nothing to deserve the approval of a religious mind; both in faith and in morals it fell far below the standard

of the true service of Jehovah; the worship of false gods, oppression by enemies as a punishment, an appeal for help, a deliverance by the Judge, followed one another time after time in dire succession; to illustrate this is the object of the history which follows. In the case of Othniel tradition had preserved little beyond his name; the account of him, therefore, is composed entirely out of the formulae of the compiler (iii. 7—11). But of the five other Judges full narratives existed, and most of them are prefaced and concluded with a similar refrain: *the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord sold* (or *delivered*) *them into the hand of...; then they cried unto the Lord; and...was subdued; and the land had rest...years*[1]. Into this rationale of the period the compiler worked a system of chronology, which gives in each case the years of the oppression and of the peace which followed; for the most part the years are determined by the principle of a generation, either halved or doubled, 20, 40, 80. Now besides the six Greater Judges, a list of five Minor Judges is introduced before and after Jephthah, x. 1—5 and xii. 8—15. These last are treated quite differently from the former; nothing is said about national sin, oppression, and deliverance; they are not *judges* in the sense of ii. 11—19; some of the names belong elsewhere to clans, not to individuals; the years assigned to them are arranged on no particular principle. Since, therefore, the Minor Judges do not illustrate the theory of the compiler, they appear to stand outside his scheme. Did he insert them from some special source, or were they added later? It has been suggested that the five Minor Judges, and Abimelech, were introduced by some other hand to bring up the number to twelve. But the five are represented as belonging to the succession; *after Abimelech there arose...and after him...and after him...etc.*; moreover the notices of Jephthah (xii. 7) and of Samson (xv. 20) use the word *judged* (followed by the number of years) in the same way as the list of the Minor Judges; and as the chronology of the Book elsewhere is due to the compiler, it seems natural to suppose that

[1] Othniel iii. 7—11; Ehud iii. 12, 15, 30; Deborah and Barak iv. 1—3, 23, v. 31b; Gideon vi. 1, 6b, viii. 28; Jephthah x. 6, 7, 10, xi. 33b; Samson xiii. 1, xv. 20, xvi. 31 end.

he is responsible for the chronology of the Minor Judges also; but he must have derived it from some special information at his disposal. Without feeling any certainty on the subject, we may at any rate adopt this as a working hypothesis.

Is it possible to determine the age and affinities of the compiler? The question admits of a clear answer. His point of view corresponds with that of the historical sections of Deuteronomy and of the Deuteronomic elements in the Book of Joshua; his language also shews that he belonged to the school of writers which worked in the spirit of Deuteronomy and adopted its terminology, the school of the compiler of Kings, with which the prophet Jeremiah is connected. The following lists illustrate the characteristics of our author and his indebtedness to the Deuteronomic school.

(*a*) Expressions characteristic of the compiler:

1. *Jehovah raised up* (judges) ii. 16, 18, iii. 9, 15.

2. *a saviour, saved them* (of the judge) ii. 16, 18, iii. 9, 15, x. 1; cf. x. 12, 13 (of Jehovah).

3. *judge, he judged* (in the special sense of *deliverer* or *he vindicated*) ii. 16, 17, 18, 19, iii. 10, ? iv. 4; 2 Sam. vii. 11 (Deut.) = 1 Chr. xvii. 10, 2 Kings xxiii. 22, 1 Chr. xvii. 6, Ruth i. 1. For the use of the word in the sense of *ruler* (followed by a date) see p. xi *n*.

4. *sold them into the hand of* ii. 14, iii. 8, iv. 2 cf. 9, x. 7. For the figure cf. Deut. xxviii. 68, xxxii. 30, 1 Sam. xii. 9 (Deut.), Ezek. xxx. 12, Ps. xliv. 12.

5. *delivered them into the hand of* ii. 14, vi. 1, xiii. 1.

6. *oppressed, oppressors* (*laḥaṣ*) ii. 18, iv. 3, vi. 9, x. 12; cf. Ex. iii. 9 E, 1 Sam. x. 18, 2 Kings xiii. 4, 22, Is. xix. 20, Jer. xxx. 20.

7. *cried* (*zaʿaḳ*) iii. 9, 15, vi. 6, 7, x. 10, 14, (*saʿaḳ*) iv. 3, x. 12; cf. Ex. iii. 9 E, Is. xix. 20.

8. *subdued* iii. 30, iv. 23, viii. 28, xi. 33; cf. Deut. ix. 3, 1 Sam. vii. 13 (Deut.), 2 Sam. viii. 1, 1 Chr. xvii. 10 etc.; perhaps, like No. 7, adopted from the pre-Dtc. Book of Judges.

9. *and the land had rest* iii. 11, 30, v. 31 b, viii. 28, Josh. xi. 23, xiv. 15 (both Deut.), 2 Chr. xiv. 1, 6.

(*b*) Expressions which shew the relation between the compiler and Deuteronomy, and the passages in Joshua, Kings, and Jeremiah influenced by Deuteronomy

1. *and the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of the* LORD ii. 11, iii. 7, 12, iv. 1, vi. 1, x. 6, xiii. 1 ; Deut. iv. 25, ix. 18, xvii. 2, xxxi. 29 ; 1 Kings xi. 6, xiv. 22, xv. 26 etc. ; Jer. vii. 30, xviii. 10, xxxii. 30, lii. 2 ; occasionally elsewhere, 1 Sam. xv. 19, 2 Sam. xii. 9 etc.

2. *forsook* (Jehovah) ii. 12, x. 6, 10, 13 ; Deut. xxviii. 20, 1 Kings xi. 33, 2 Kings xxi. 22, xxii. 17 (all Deut.), Jer. i. 16 and often in Jer. Also in JE, Deut. xxxi. 16, xxxii. 15, Josh. xxiv. 20 E.

3. *Jehovah, the God of their fathers* ii. 12 ; Deut. i. 11, 21, iv. 1, vi. 3, xii. 1, xxvi. 7, xxvii. 3, xxix. 25.

4. *after other gods, and bowed themselves down to them* ii. 12, 17, 19 ; Deut. viii. 19, xi. 16, xvii. 3, xxix. 26, cf. xxx. 17 ; *other gods* (with *serve* or *go after*) also 10 times in Deut. beside the passages quoted ; very frequent in the Dtc. parts of Kings and in Jer. First in E, Josh. xxiv. 16 b, Jud. x. 13 ? E.

5. *the peoples round about them* ii. 12 ; Deut. vi. 14, xiii. 7.

6. *provoked the Lord to anger* ii. 12 ; Deut. iv. 25, ix. 18, xxxi. 29 cf. xxxii. 21 JE ; 1 K. xvi. 7, 2 K. xxii. 17 (Deut.), Jer. xxv. 6 etc.

7. *their enemies round about* ii. 14, viii. 34 ; Deut. xii. 10, xxv. 19 ; Josh. xxi. 44, xxiii. 1, 1 Sam. xii. 11, 2 Sam. vii. 1 (all Deut.).

8. *as the* LORD *had spoken* (i.e. promised) ii. 15 ; Deut. 14 times (i. 11, vi. 19 etc.) ; Josh. xiv. 10, 12, xxii. 4, xxiii. 5, 10 (Deut.) ; 1 K. v. 12, viii. 20, 56 (Deut.).

9. *turned aside quickly out of the way* ii. 17 ; Deut. ix. 12, 16 cf. xi. 28, xxxi. 29. First in Ex. xxxii. 8 E.

10. *obey* (lit. *hearken to*) *the commandments of the* LORD ii. 17, iii. 4 ; Deut. xi. 13, 27, xxviii. 13, cf. viii. 2.

11. *transgressed my covenant* ii. 20 ; Deut. xvii. 2 ; Josh. xxiii. 16, 2 K. xviii. 12 (Deut.) ; Jer. xxxiv. 18. First in JE, Josh. vii. 11, 15.

12. *to drive out* (lit. *cause others to possess*, i.e. *dispossess*) ii. 21, 23 ; Deut. iv. 38, ix. 4, 5, xi. 23, xviii. 12 ; Josh. iii. 10,

xiii. 6, xxiii. 5, 9, 13, 1 K. xiv. 24, xxi. 26, 2 K. xvi. 3, xvii. 8, xxi. 2 (all Deut.). So Ex. xxxiv. 24, Num. xxi. 32 (cf. Jud. xi. 23, 24), xxxii. 21 JE.

13. *the way of the* LORD *to walk therein* ii. 22 ; Deut. v. 33, viii. 6, x. 12+6 times ; Josh. xxii. 5, 1 K. ii. 3, iii. 14, viii. 58, xi. 33 (all Deut.). Cf. Ex. xviii. 20 E.

14. *forget Jehovah their God* iii. 7 ; Deut. vi. 12, viii. 11, 14, 19 ; 1 S. xii. 9 (Deut.).

These facts shew that the compiler must have drawn up the main body of the Book, ii. 6—xvi. 31, after the promulgation of Deuteronomy in 621 B.C., and that he belonged to the age of Jeremiah, the early part of the sixth century. We may, then, use the symbol RD, i.e. Deuteronomic Redactor, to mark his handiwork.

B. *The pre-Deuteronomic Book of Judges.* The work of RD, as we have seen, was mainly one of compilation and interpretation ; he was not himself the author of the stories which recount the deeds of the heroes, for in style they reveal no traces of his unmistakable handling, and in substance they do not bear out his view of the history. By their manner and treatment the stories remind us of the patriarchal narratives in Genesis, and still more of the narratives of Saul and David in the Books of Samuel. It is universally agreed that they are ancient compositions, dating perhaps from the early days of the monarchy, and founded upon oral traditions. This method of transcribing old material to form the basis of a historical work finds an exact parallel in Josh. i.—xii. : the narratives of the Dtc. Book of Joshua were not written by the Dtc. redactor, but incorporated by him from an earlier work. The question then arises, did the old stories in Judges exist in some collected form before they were taken in hand by RD? In other words, was there a pre-Deuteronomic Book of Judges?

Now when closely examined, it will be seen that these old stories themselves were not composed by a single writer ; the inconsistency of details, the differences of presentation, the repetitions and redundancies of phraseology, all point to a derivation from more than one source. In the account of Deborah and Barak, for example, two versions have reached us,

the one in prose ch. iv., the other in poetry ch. v.; the latter may well have been taken from some popular collection, such as the Book of Jashar, or the Book of the Wars of Jehovah (2 Sam. i. 18, Num. xxi. 14). In the case of Gideon, again, chs. vi.—viii., a double thread seems to run through the narrative: his call and the erection of an altar are told twice over (vi. 11—24 cf. *vv.* 25—32; vi. 24 cf. *vv.* 25, 26); the victory of the Ephraimites over the Midianite chiefs Oreb and Zeeb (vii. 24 ff.) finds a parallel in Gideon's pursuit of the Midianite kings Zeba and Zalmunna (viii. 4—21). In the account of Jephthah it is more difficult to unravel the sources, but a long section has been borrowed from JE's history of the age of Moses (xi. 12—28). The stories told about Samson do not shew signs of composite authorship, but the birth-story, ch. xiii., may well have arisen later than the others, after he had become famous, like the stories of Samuel's youth. In the Appendices there is clear evidence for a combination of narratives; it will be sufficient to refer to the commentary for particulars. The old histories, then, were composed from several sources, and this must have taken place before RD compiled his work. Can we go further, and maintain that the old histories were not only composed but collected into a book before the Dtc. redaction? The question hardly admits of a decisive answer, though there are indications which point to an affirmative. If such a thing as a pre-Dtc. Book of Judges ever existed, it was most likely provided with some brief introductory passages, connecting the ancient stories with one another and setting them in their historical context. Now it seems probable that fragments, at any rate, of such introductory notices have survived in the summaries of the period given in ii. 6—iii. 6, vi. 1—10, x. 6—16. When examined they are found to be not wholly consistent. This appears most strikingly in the case of ii. 6—iii. 6, which proposes no less than three answers to the question, How was it that the Israelites did not succeed in conquering the Canaanites? It was to punish Israel for its sins (ii. 20, 21); to test Israel's fidelity (ii. 22, iii. 1 a, 3, 4); to practise Israel in the art of war (iii. 2). Explanations so different cannot have been proposed by one and the same writer. Though the passage as a whole has passed

through the hands of RD, it cannot be entirely his work ; certain elements may have been added later ; others again, especially ii. 23, iii. 2, belong to a circle of ideas which is not that of RD. Similarly in vi. 1—10 ; here *vv.* 2—6 a are in substance founded upon the old story which follows ; the redundancy of the text, however, proves that the passage does not come from a single hand ; it has received additions, but in part belongs to an earlier source than the framework of RD. The phenomena are repeated in x. 6—16 ; the Dtc. strain is interwoven with elements of a different character and origin. Thus in all three passages we mark the presence of phrases and ideas which are foreign to the Dtc. circle ; and though we cannot define the exact limits of this non-Dtc. element, yet it is possible to identify its associations. In all three passages there occur phrases which recall the language of E in the Hexateuch[1]. We may explain this fact by

[1] The following are the most significant :—(1) *drive out* i.e. the native races, ii. 3, vi. 9 ; Ex. xxiii. 28—31 E, xxxiii. 2 (Gl), xxxiv. 11 JE, Josh. xxiv. 12, 18 E.

(2) *their gods...a snare* ii. 3 ; Ex. xxiii. 33, xxxiv. 12 JE, Josh. xxiii. 13 D, Deut. vii. 16.

(3) *hearkened unto* (*my*) *voice* ii. 20 ; Ex. xv. 26 JE, xviii. 24 E. Cf. Deut. xv. 5, xxviii. 1 etc.

(4) *to prove* ii. 22, iii. 1, 4 ; Ex. xvi. 4 ? J, xv. 25, xx. 20 E, Deut. viii. 2, 16, xiii. 3.

(5) *because of* (unusual expression) vi. 7 ; Gen. xxi. 11, 25, Ex. xviii. 8, Num. xii. 1, xiii. 24 E.

(6) the allusion to a *prophet* vi. 8, cf. iv. 4 ; Gen. xx. 7, Ex. xv. 20, Num. xi. 25—29, xii. 6 E.

(7) *Amorites* (the original inhabitants of Canaan) vi. 10 ; 13 times in E, 5 times in D, 4 times in Josh. (RD). See i. 34 *n.*

(8) *we have sinned* x. 10, 15 ; Num. xii. 11, xiv. 40 (=Deut. i. 41), xxi. 7 E.

(9) *strange* i.e. foreign *gods* x. 16 ; Gen. xxxv. 2, 4, Josh. xxiv. 20, 23 E, Deut. xxxi. 16 JE ; in Deut. *other gods.*

(10) *soul...grieved* x. 16 ; Num. xxi. 4 E (of the people).

(11) *misery* x. 16 ; Gen. xli. 51 E ('toil'), Num. xxiii. 21 ? E ('perverseness'), Deut. xxvi. 7 ('toil').

(12) the opposition to the Baals and Canaanite influences ii. 13, x. 6 ; Deut. xxxi. 16 f., Josh. xxiv. 20 E.

supposing that the phrases in question were deliberately imitated from E by the latest editor, and by him inserted into RD's three introductions; on the other hand it is just as possible, and, from the considerations alleged above, more probable, that the stories of the heroes were collected and provided with brief introductory and connecting passages before RD undertook his systematic work of editing. We seem, then, to be led to the conclusion that there did exist a pre-Dtc. Book of Judges which formed the basis, and to some extent the model, of the Dtc. redaction; perhaps such expressions as *cried to Jehovah* (iii. 15, iv. 3, vi. 6), marking the prelude to the narrative of deliverance, and *subdued* (iii. 30, iv. 23, viii. 28, xi. 33), stating the result of the appeal for help, may have belonged to this earlier form of the Book.

We have discovered, then, echoes of E in the three summaries, ii. 6—iii. 6, vi. 1—10, x. 6—16. Can we find any traces of the other ancient source known as J in the Hexateuch? With reference to the terms Jehovist and Elohist a caution is needed. We must not think of individual writers, but of a succession of writers, "the historiography of certain period or school" (Moore); and when we use the symbols J and E it must clearly be understood that they are used in this sense. Now in the section i. 1—ii. 5 we have a collection of fragments which occur also in the Book of Joshua, loosely attached to their present context[1]. These identical, or nearly identical passages, appear to be derived, both in Joshua and in Judges, from an ancient account of the invasion of Canaan, which may have formed part of the Jehovist history. This common source may have existed independently; but for convenience, and on account of its archaic character, it may be designated by the symbol J. Then in xi. 12—28 we find an excerpt, almost word for word, from JE's narrative in Num. xx. and xxi. On general grounds it might be supposed that the wars of Jehovah during the period of the Judges would be a congenial theme to writers of the Jehovist and Elohist schools, and we might expect to find that the ancient stories were in a large measure composed by them; and when we examine the

[1] Jud. i. 10—15, 20=Josh. xv. 13—19; Jud. i. 21=Josh. xv. 63; Jud. i. 27=Josh. xvii. 11—13; Jud. i. 29=Josh. xvi. 10.

narratives of Gideon and Jephthah, and the Appendices, we discover certain expressions and ideas characteristic of J and E in the Hexateuch[1]. Budde, followed by other scholars, has carried through a skilful analysis of the sources, and he does not hesitate (except in chs. xvii.—xxi.) to assign them to J, E, J^2, E^2 etc. The analysis is often successful, but in many cases scholars are far from agreed about the details. The present editor, while he is convinced of the composite structure of the ancient stories, does not feel able to give names to the component elements which imply a closer connexion with the Jehovist and Elohist writings than can be regarded as clearly made out. Moreover, the evidence often suggests editorial expansions and additions rather than the combination of parallel sources; on this account, and for want of any decisive indication of origin, it seems better not to speak too confidently; we must content ourselves with observing the facts without venturing to give them definite labels.

C. *The post-Deuteronomic additions.* In a real sense the Deuteronomic Redactor may be termed the author of Judges, but not of the whole Book; certain valuable and important sections were added after he had done his work. As we have seen (p. xiv),

[1] The following are to be noted as pointing to J:—*find grace* or *favour* vi. 17; Gen. vi. 8 and 20 times in J; *forasmuch as* vi. 22; Gen. xviii. 5 and 5 times in J; *Ishmaelites* (instead of *Midianites*) viii. 24; Gen. xxxvii. 25, 27, 28, xxxix. 1 J; *what is this that thou hast done?* xv. 11; Gen. iii. 13, xii. 18, xxvi. 10, Ex. xiv. 5, 11 J, Gen. xxix. 25, xlii. 28 E.

Among the more distinctive marks of affinity with E are these:—the use of *Elohim* vi. 36—40, ix. 23, 56 f., xviii. 10; the divine message conveyed at *night* or in a *dream* vi. 25, 36—40, vii. 9—15; Gen. xxviii. 11, 12, xxxvii. 5 ff., xl. 5, xli. 1—7 E; the interest shewn in traditional religious customs xi. 40, xvii. 3 ff.; Gen. xxxi. 19, 30 (cf. Jud. xviii. 24), xxxv. 4, Ex. xxiv. 4, Josh. xxiv. 15 etc. E; the trans-Jordanic associations of Israel xi. 12—28; Num. xx. 14—21, xxi. 12—20, 21—24 JE; *the armed men* vii. 11; Ex. xiii. 18 E, Josh. i. 14, iv. 12 D; *citizens* (*be'ālîm*) ix. 2 ff., xx. 5; Num. xxi. 28 JE, Josh. xxiv. 11 E; *sin* (against man) xi. 27; Gen. xx. 9, xl. 1, xlii. 22, Ex. v. 16 J. It is in the three introductory passages, however, that the influence of the school of E appears most distinctly; see the list given above, p. xix.

some scholars regard the brief notices of the Minor Judges as later additions, and there is a good deal to be said in favour of this view ; but in the absence of any clear evidence one way or the other, we may consider RD as responsible for introducing them. In the following cases we are on surer ground. (1) Ch. ix., which contains the story of Abimelech, shews no traces of RD's characteristic handling ; apparently he omitted it as not contributing anything to the moral which he wished to impress. This chapter, therefore, may be regarded as an addition to the Dtc. Book of Judges. (2) The same may be said of ch. xvi. It is remarkable that we find two notices of the duration of Samson's judgeship, in xv. 20 and xvi. 31. Now the story of Samson formed part of RD's scheme : it begins with his usual formula (xiii. 1), and xv. 20 brings it to a conclusion with the remark *and he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years*. The chapter which follows, giving an account of Samson's fall and tragic end, thus appears to lie outside the plan of the compiler. Perhaps he did not wish to include a narrative which was not wholly creditable to the hero or edifying to the reader ; but fortunately the omission has been supplied, and to it was appended a conclusion modelled on the usual form (xvi. 31).

So far we have been dealing with the main body of the Book, ii. 6—xvi. 31 ; there remain the additions at the beginning and the end. (3) The opening chapter i. 1—ii. 5 must have been added later than the Dtc. redaction, for it describes what happened *after the death of Joshua* (i. 1), while ii. 6—xvi. 31 starts with a reference to Joshua as still alive, and proceeds to take up the thread of history from his life-time. (4) The two Appendices, chs. xvii.—xviii. and chs. xix.—xxi., clearly stand outside the Dtc. book ; they record certain tribal traditions, not the exploits of Judges ; they do not illustrate the principles which RD wished to enforce, and must have been added after his work was finished.

Now these four large additions exhibit much the same features as the ancient narratives which RD incorporated into his book ; they reveal the primitive religious ideas and the semi-barbarous manners of the time in a way which convinces us

of their value as historical documents. Obviously, then, a good deal of material for the history of the age was in existence when RD composed his work; some of it, which he rejected, was secured by a later editor, and used with admirable effect to enrich the Book. Moreover, it is possible to determine approximately when these additions were made. Inserted among the ancient fragments contained in i. 1—ii. 5 are certain expressions which indicate that the editor belonged to the school of writers which drew up the Priestly Code of the Pentateuch; see especially i. 1 a, 4, 8—10 a, 18, 23, ii. 1 b—5 a. The connexion with P is more clearly marked in chs. xx. and xxi., e.g. xx. 1 b, 12, 27 f., xxi. 10 ff. In the case of the additions (1) and (2) we do not find any decisive signs which indicate the school of the editor who placed them where they stand. Thus while we can say with certainty that the Dtc. Book of Judges received important extensions after the early part of the sixth century, that is, in the exilic or post-exilic period, and that in some respects this later editorial work shews affinities with the school of P, we cannot be sure that a single editor was responsible for this enrichment; indeed many minor additions were made in the course of time, as the commentary will shew.

(5) One more interesting addition may be noticed, iii. 31. Apparently some reader, on the strength of the allusion to Shamgar in v. 6, inserted the verse under a misconception; for Shamgar is there alluded to as an oppressor, not a deliverer. An enterprise against the Philistines comes too early at this stage of the history; and in fact a group of Greek MSS. repeat the verse after xvi. 31, shewing that some Greek translators felt uncertain about its proper position. It is suggested by Budde that a late reviser, who objected to Abimelech being reckoned as one of the twelve judges, intended to substitute Shamgar. However this may be, the verse is probably the latest addition which the Book received.

The following, then, are the stages by which the Book of Judges reached its present form:

(*a*) Stories of the heroes, which had been current on the lips of the people, were committed to writing in more than one version, probably in the early days of the monarchy. Before

any of these the Song of Deborah most likely existed in a collection of songs.

(*b*) The stories appear to have been collected to form a book, and provided with short introductory and connecting passages, probably at a time contemporary with the editorial work of JE.

(*c*) After the publication of Deuteronomy, and probably in the first half of the 6th century, this earlier work was taken in hand by an author filled with the spirit of the Dtc. school, who enlarged and arranged it on a definite plan framed to illustrate certain historical and religious principles.

(*d*) A later editor in the 5th century expanded this Dtc. book by adding to it certain early documents which concerned the period, i. 1—ii. 5, ix., xvi., xvii.—xxi.

(*e*) A further editorial process followed, introducing fresh additions and expansions, e.g. iii. 31.

While we may thus distinguish the stages by which our present Book grew into shape, it must be remembered that the really important matter is to mark off the work of the Dtc. compiler from the older sources which he used; this can be done with considerable precision, while the analysis of the older sources must remain largely provisional.

§ 3. The Chronology of the Book

We have seen that the Dtc. compiler, besides interpreting the documents before him, fitted them into a scheme of chronology. Whether he found any data to go upon we cannot tell; but in the main he is responsible for the system of numbered periods, because it is inseparably linked to his interpretation of the history. He regarded the Judges not only as ruling over all Israel, but as following one another in regular succession—a theory which is not borne out by the early sources. The chronology of the compiler, therefore, stands on the same level as his interpretation; both have an interest and value of their own, and both are to be estimated in the same

spirit. The following are the chronological data given in the Book·

iii. 8.	Israel serves Cushan-rishathaim	8	years.
iii 11.	Deliverance by Othniel : the land rests	40	„
iii. 14.	Israel serves Eglon	18	
iii. 30.	Deliverance by Ehud : the land rests	80	„
iv. 3.	Oppression by Jabin	20	
v. 31.	Deliverance by Deborah : the land rests	40	„
vi. 1	Oppression by the Midianites	7	
viii. 28.	Deliverance by Gideon : the land rests	40	„
ix. 22.	Abimelech reigns over Israel	3	
x. 2.	Tola judges Israel	23	
x. 3.	Jair judges Israel	22	
x. 8.	Oppression by the Ammonites	18	
xii. 7.	Jephthah judges Israel	6	
xii. 9.	Ibzan judges Israel	7	
xii. 11.	Elon judges Israel	10	
xii. 14.	Abdon judges Israel	8	
xiii. 1.	Oppression by the Philistines	40	
xv. 20, xvi. 31.	Samson judges Israel	20	
		Total, 410	years.

Now in 1 Kings vi. 1 the number of years from the Exodus to the 4th year of Solomon, when the building of the temple was begun, is given as 480; and the problem arises, how can this figure be reconciled with the total in Judges[1], plus the additional years required to fill up the period? Thus:

[1] In Acts xiii. 19 f. the weight of MS. authority undoubtedly supports the text of Westcott and Hort adopted by the RV.; the 450 years are reckoned from Abraham (presumably from the promise made to him) up to the Judges. The reading followed by the AV., however, assigns the 450 years to the Judges; and this, in spite of inferior support from the MSS., is preferred by many, e.g. by Blass, on the ground that the other reading is a rather obvious correction. If we follow the AV., and assign the 450 to the Judges, we must suppose that St Paul is here using popular chronology, of which a specimen is given by Josephus, *Ant.* viii. 3, 1.

Num. xxxii. 13.	Wandering in the desert	40	years.
Judg. ii. 7.	Joshua and the elders	*x*	„
Judg. iii. 8–xvi. 31.	The Judges	410	years
1 Sam. iv. 18.	Eli judges Israel	40	„ (LXX. 20.)
1 Sam. vii. 2, 15.	Samuel judges Israel	20+?	„
	Saul	*y*	.
1 Kings ii. 11.	David	40	
1 Kings vi. 1.	Solomon	4	
	Total, more than	554	years.

Many attempts have been made to account for these conflicting totals, none of them with entire success. For the present purpose it will be sufficient to explain the method which, in the main and with some variation in details, is now most generally adopted. It was Nöldeke who first drew attention to the practice followed by the Jewish and early Christian chronologers in dealing with our period: the years of foreign domination were passed over, and the beginning of a new Judge's rule was dated, not from his victory over the oppressor, but from the death of the Judge before him[1]. Besides the years of the oppressions, those of usurpers are also to be dropped, the three of Abimelech, and the unknown length of the reign of Saul, who was not counted by the Jews as a lawful king. Then we find that the period of the Philistine domination, 40 years, is exactly covered by the 20 of Samuel and the 20 of Eli (according to the LXX. of 1 Sam. iv. 18). Further, as Nöldeke points out, omitting Abimelech, the years of the Minor Judges (70) with Jephthah (6), come to 76, and thus we obtain, by including the four years of Solomon, another instance of the recurring multiple of 20. Thus:

[1] *Untersuchungen zur Kritik des A.T.: Die Chronologie der Richterzeit*, 1869, pp. 173—198. The Jewish commentators followed this method; see also *Seder 'Olam*, ch. 12; Eusebius, *Chron.* ii. p. 35 (ed. Schoene) Post mortem Iesu subiectos tenuerunt Iudaeos alienigenae ann. viii., qui iunguntur temporibus Gothoniel secundum Iudaeorum traditiones. Nöldeke's explanation is worked out with variations by Moore, Lagrange, and others.

Wandering in the desert	40 years.
Joshua and the elders	x ,,
Othniel	40
Ehud	80
Deborah	40
Gideon	40
Samson	20
Eli	20 ,,
Samuel	y years
David	40 ,,
Minor judges and the 4 years of Solomon	80 ,,
	Total, 400 years.

There remain 80 years for x and y. The foregoing scheme, which, it will be noticed, is framed on the principle of 40 years to a generation, either halved or doubled, suggests that 40 years each are to be given to Joshua and Samuel. Thus we obtain the required total of 480 (1 Kings vi. 1) which may well be intended to represent the lapse of 12 generations (40×12). Nothing could be more satisfactory; but we must bear in mind that the scheme rests upon several assumptions, (*a*) that the years of oppressions and of usurpers are not to be counted, (*b*) that the Minor Judges were included in the chronology of RD, (*c*) that we have guessed the right numbers for Joshua and Samuel.

In any case the chronology as we have it in the Book of Judges is obviously artificial. Human history does not fit precisely into periods of 20, 40, 80 years; but the attempt thus to reckon it is interesting as an illustration of the methods of ancient historians.

The period covered by the Book cannot have lasted so long as 410 years. If we may place the Exodus in the time of Merenptah (1234—1214 Petrie, or 1225—1215 Breasted), i.e. in the 13th century B.C., and the reign of David in the 11th century (*c.* 1010 B.C. for the beginning of it), we have two, or two and a half centuries for the period of the Judges, which is amply sufficient for the events recorded.

§ 4. The History and Religion of the Period

When we have distinguished the work of successive editors from the early sources which they incorporate, we are in a position to form some idea of the history and religion of the period. The history, it must be remembered, is related in a series of pictures rather than in an exhaustive narrative. Thus while the incidents of a crisis or a battle are described with vivid detail, little is said about the ordinary life of old Israel in times of peace; we have to glean what we can from stray allusions. Again, the compilers of the O.T. historical books display little interest in history for its own sake; they set to work with a definite purpose, and selected such episodes as would illustrate it; and since they had no other aim than religious edification, the moral of the story was all-important in their eyes. We find, then, that many gaps occur which cannot be filled.

A. *The occupation of Canaan.* Jud. i. tells us how gradually and partially this was accomplished, indeed the tradition there imbedded has preserved a record mainly of failures. So far back as the 15th century B.C. the Canaanites, as the Amarna tablets shew, were in possession of the country, organized under petty rulers, owning allegiance to the Pharaoh of Egypt, and corresponding with him in the language and script of Babylonia. The civilization of Canaan was thus of long standing, and, under the influences of Babylon and Egypt, it had reached a considerable degree of development. The natives tilled the soil, dwelt in fortified towns under the local chief, and possessed a distinctive religion of their own. Though not constituted as a united nation, they could on occasion combine their forces under a single leader; the feuds of ages had practised them in the art of war; their horses and armoured chariots enabled them to hold the level country, their strong walls protected them among the hills. No wonder, then, that the Hebrew nomads proved unequal to the task of overthrowing a civilization so much superior to their own.

According to the tradition given in Jud. i. the tribes of Israel entered Canaan from the East, after crossing the Jordan a little to the N. of the Dead Sea; from an encampment on the plain

of Jericho (i. 16, ii. 1) they started to make their way into the new country, having previously arranged where their several 'lots' were to be. The main stream of immigration may well have followed this direction; but the tradition here and elsewhere seems to have preserved the recollection of another movement from a different quarter. The narrative of Jud. i. implies that the Southern tribes, Judah and Simeon, together with the Kenites and Kenizzites (Caleb), accompanied the rest in a circuit round to the E. of Jordan; and that, after entering Canaan, they penetrated into the Central Highlands, and thence descended Southwards to the Negeb. Throughout, the advance is towards the South. After securing their 'lot' with Simeon's help, Hebron is captured for Caleb; then the Kenites move from Jericho to Zephath, still further South (i. 20, 10, 16 f.). Now this district of the Negeb was the native home of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Jerahmeelites (1 Sam. xxvii. 10), and in the South of it, at Kadesh, the main group of Hebrew tribes were stationed for a long time during the period of the Exodus. We are struck at once by the improbability of the Kenites and the other clans taking such a roundabout way of reaching the district which had been the home of their ancestors; and we must bear in mind that the Canaanites held a barrier of strongholds in line with Jerusalem (i. 21, 29, 35, Josh. ix. 17), which would effectually check an invasion descending from the Central Highlands to the South. Hence it appears likely that Judah and Simeon, with the Kenites and other clans, did not enter Canaan from the East at all, but made their way into the country direct from the South to the North, after the events at Kadesh (Num. xiii., xiv.)[1]. A recollection of this movement from Kadesh upwards to the Negeb seems to be contained in the fragment Num. xxi. 1—3, which is out of place where it stands, and applies to the whole people a tradition which originally concerned only a part of Israel. As time went on, we know that Judah gradually

[1] See further Steuernagel, *Die Einwanderung der israelitischen Stämme in Kanaan*, 1901, pp. 73 ff.; Ed. Meyer, *Die Israeliten u. ihre Nachbarstämme*, 1906, pp. 72 ff.; S. A. Cook, *Notes on O.T. History*, 1907, pp. 38 f., 91 ff. Meyer suggests that an apportionment of the land by lot may have taken place at Kadesh.

penetrated still further towards the North, and extended to Bethlehem and Jerusalem, and an advance in the same direction on the part of the Calebites also is implied by the genealogy in 1 Chr. ii. 50 ff. Supposing, then, that the Southern tribes succeeded in making their way into the Negeb direct from Kadesh, a good many obscurities are cleared up. We can understand why Judah did not flow into the main current of national life: not even David and Solomon could effect a permanent fusion. From the first Judah and Simeon had gone their own way by themselves, and contained many elements which, while not alien to the Israelite race, were not in full relationship with it. For a long time these elements in Judah maintained a distinct life of their own; they still clung to the habits and principles of their ancestors; and when questions were asked, How came the Calebites, not strictly of Israel, to be settled in Hebron and Kiriath-sepher, in such close connexion with Judah? the answer was given that Moses himself had endowed Caleb with this territory (Jud. i. 20, cf. Num. xiv. 24 JE, Josh. xiv. 6—15 D). So fully did Caleb become incorporated, that in the later genealogies he is actually counted as a 'prince of Judah,' and Judah itself is mainly composed of Caleb's descendants (Num. xiii. 6 P, xxxiv. 18, 19 P, 1 Chr. ii. 48 ff.).

One feature comes out distinctly from the narrative in Jud. i. —the independent action of the different tribes. There was no united effort, no common leader; and the native population suffered no total defeat. The most that the Israelites achieved was to establish themselves in the hill country of the Centre and North. Joseph was cut off from Judah, as mentioned above, by a line of Canaanite towns running from E. to W., Mount Heres, Aijalon, Shaalbim, Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, Kiriath-jearim (i. 35, Josh. ix. 17); Jerusalem continued to be Jebusite. In the North, Issachar, Zebulun, Asher, and Naphtali[1] were separated from the tribes of Central Canaan by another barrier

[1] It is not unlikely that Asher and the other Northern tribes were already settled in their districts before the time of Moses, and did not take part with Judah, Simeon, and the Joseph-tribes in the migration to Egypt and the Exodus. See on i. 31; and Burney, *Journ. of Theol. Studies* ix. (1908), pp. 333—340; Driver, *Exodus*, p. 416 f.

of strongholds from the sea to the Jordan, Dor, Harosheth, Megiddo, Taanach, Ibleam, on the S. of the Great Plain (i. 27, iv. 2); the valley of Jezreel leading down to the Jordan, with the fortress of Beth-shean, remained in Canaanite possession (Josh. xvii. 16). For many a long year this state of things continued, and it was all that the tribes could do to keep a hold upon the seats which they had won in the midst of a hostile population. Such is the account given by Jud. i.; it is borne out by all the early narratives, and, it is interesting to discover, by the results of recent excavations in Palestine. "The arrival of the Israelites marked neither a revolution nor any abrupt movement progressive or retrograde. There is no sudden change in the pottery, in the sacred places or in the forms of culture. Civilization and religion shew no sensible alteration[1]." The Book of Joshua tells a very different story, as is shewn in the commentary. Historical criticism relieves us to a great extent of the moral difficulty created by the wholesale slaughter of the Canaanites; it was the patriotic imagination of a much later day which pictured the occupation of the land in this triumphant fashion.

B. *The history of Israel during the period.* The settlement in Canaan involved the momentous change from a nomadic to an agricultural life. Hitherto the Hebrews had been shepherds and herdsmen, ranging over the desert-steppes; now they began to live in towns and villages, to own land and till the soil. With a settled life sprang up the arts of peace, building and handicraft, the arts also of disciplined warfare and defence, but first and foremost the pursuit of agriculture. Great changes took place also in social organization. The old tribal divisions remained, as the Song of Deborah shews; at the same time new combinations, no longer limited by ties of blood, became inevitable so soon as land was acquired and the people established themselves in the cities. Alliances were made with the Canaanites, who were often friendly, and Israel entered a larger world of common interests and obligations. We have instances of *connubium* and *commercium* at Shechem (ch. ix.), and in the

[1] S. A. Cook, *Expositor* viii. 1909, p. 99. See also Vincent, *Canaan*, 1907, p. 463 f., Driver, *Schweich Lectures*, 1909, p. 87.

tales of Samson and the Philistines (chs. xiv., xvi.). Thus changes became necessary in the government of the community. In the old nomadic life authority was partly patriarchal and partly aristocratic ; the head of the family ruled his own kith and kin, while the chiefs, or representatives of leading families, directed the affairs of the clan or tribe. This latter authority seems gradually to have superseded the other. It was only in times of crisis that the head of a family was made a chief (*ḳāṣîn*, xi. 6) over other families and clans ; when the crisis was over he retired into private life. But now we notice an extension of the principle of government by the heads of leading families. In the towns, at any rate, we find a ruling body composed of the citizens (*beʿālīm*, ix. 2 ff., xx. 5 f., 1 Sam. xxiii. 11 f.), sometimes called the princes (v. 15, viii. 14) and elders (viii. 14, xi. 5), who governed the community and prescribed its laws ('governors' v. 9, 14, Gen. xlix. 10); we hear of this ruling class at Shechem (where was also a 'prince of the city' ix. 30), at Succoth, Penuel, Gilead, Gibeah. The stories of Gideon and Abimelech throw a valuable light on this early form of local government, of which the full development appears in the regular oligarchy of the Phoenician and Philistine towns.

When Israel had reached the stage of government by princes, elders, and judges, had begun to own and till the land, and started various industries of settled life, some rudimentary code of justice must have come into existence. The traditional laws of blood-revenge (viii. 19, xvi. 28, 2 Sam. xiv. 5 ff.) no longer sufficed for the new conditions. Here, as in civilization and religion, the Hebrews probably learnt something from the Canaanites. Reference has been made above to the Babylonian influence which predominated in Canaan for centuries before the Israelite occupation. Through this Babylonian influence the Canaanites were no doubt made acquainted with Babylonian law, and probably administered justice more or less in accordance with the principles of the great code of Ḫammurabi (c. 2130—2088 B.C.); indirectly, therefore, through the Canaanite civilization, the Hebrews may have been brought into contact with this famous legal system. But that they possessed laws of their own is certain from an examination of the date and contents of the Book of

the Covenant, Ex. xx. 22—xxiii. 33. This venerable code exhibits the customary law of the early monarchy; it was therefore growing into shape during the days of the Judges, and some of its provisions were probably laid down much earlier, as tradition maintains. The state of society implied by the Book of the Covenant corresponds with what we know existed during our period, a primitive stage of civilization, simple in structure, and deriving its wealth from cattle and the produce of the earth. "The principles of criminal and civil justice are those still current among the Arabs of the desert, viz. retaliation and pecuniary compensation[1]"; at the same time the claims of humanity are not forgotten, and the code utters an emphatic protest against the maladministration of justice and the oppression of the poor. The ritual provisions are of the simplest: altars are to be made of earth or hewn stone; the three annual pilgrimages celebrate the three periods of the agricultural year; firstlings and firstfruits are presented as the sacred dues; the only sacrifices mentioned are the burnt offering and the peace offering; he who sacrifices to any other god than Jehovah is to be placed under the ban. Underneath, then, the struggle and disorder of the times Israel was developing its simple code for the protection of property and individual rights, for the observance of religion and the claims of morality.

So far as the records go, the history of the tribes during this period is mainly concerned with warfare. From time to time the hostility of the native population became acute (chs. iv., v.); we hear of the aggressions of neighbours on the border (ch. iii.),

[1] Robertson Smith, *O. T. in the Jewish Church*[2], p. 340. See the admirable exposition of the Book of the Covenant in Driver's *Exodus*, pp. 202—205, and App. iii. for the Code of Ḫammurabi. Kittel notes the following as marks of the antiquity of the Book of the Covenant: (*a*) the giving of the firstborn, Ex. xxii. 29, without the redemption allowed in xxxiv. 20, (*b*) the authority vested, not in the king or people, but in the head of the tribe xxii. 28, (*c*) the *sword* (RV. *tool*) used for working stone xx. 25, (*d*) the references to going *unto* or *before God* xxi. 6, xxii. 8, 9, as in the Code of Hammurabi §§ 106 f., 120, 126, 131. The laws may have been written in connexion with such sanctuaries as Shiloh and Beth-el. *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*[2], 1909, ii. p. 108.

of the raids of Arabs from the desert (chs. vi.—viii., xi., xii.), of quarrels with the Philistines in the Shephēlah (chs. xiv.—xvi.). The district which suffered most produced the hero who saved his countrymen ; beyond his own daring and faith he had only a small following to support him ; and the historian notes it as a proof of divine intervention, that a victory could be won with such slender forces (vii. 2). The narratives of the heroes are discussed in the course of the commentary, and there is no need to repeat them here. Clearly it was an age of violence and barbarous manners ; in the absence of any central authority (xvii. 6 etc.), might was right, and those who could not defend themselves had to suffer. In a time like this we must not look for any nice sense of honour or generosity ; a treacherous blow and fierce reprisals were considered praiseworthy in a struggle which neither gave nor expected any quarter ; e.g. Ehud iii. 20 ff., Jael v. 24 ff., Gideon viii. 16 ff., Samson xiv. 19, xv. 5 ff., xvi. 28, the Danites xviii. 27. The story of Micah illustrates vividly the rough practice of the day ; it is told with a humorous relish such as flavours the stories of Samson, and the narrator hardly conceals his sympathy with the raiders. Characteristically, the motive of this high-handed proceeding was to secure the proper equipment for a tribal sanctuary ; who would blame robbery and kidnapping in such a cause? The rape of maidens could be recommended as a legitimate way of relieving a difficulty. And yet that rude age had a certain moral sense and standard. There were certain things which could not be done in Israel, they were stigmatized as 'enormity.' The outrage at Gibeah seems to have shocked the average sense of right and wrong ; but it is important to notice that the real offence, and that which roused general indignation, was the violation of the rights of hospitality. The inhuman conduct of the Levite is passed over without comment ; little concern was felt, and no pity is expressed, for the fate of the unhappy woman. If we are to form any true estimate of the morality of the age, we must judge it by the standards of the day, and not by those of a later time. Yet it must not be forgotten that even the rude epoch of the Judges produced its hardy types of courage and enterprise and reliance on the national God : their worth is

appreciated with true insight by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 32 f.).

The accounts of Deborah and Gideon reveal two features which have a special interest as bearing upon later history, the first movement in the direction of national unity, and the earliest experiment in kingship. Under the inspiration of Deborah's lofty patriotism, the tribes of Israel for the first time agreed to combine in the presence of a common danger. So far they had pursued their fortunes apart from one another, as best they could; but among the scattered settlements there lay dormant the possibilities of a national life, only waiting to be quickened into action. Beside the bonds of race, the common faith formed a powerful factor which made for union; as in the history of our own country, religion became the parent and nursing-mother of the nation. How successfully Deborah could appeal to the claims of race and faith is told in the splendid Ode which commemorates the victory. But it tells us also of the jealousies and hesitations of the tribes; Meroz, a Hebrew colony on the very line of march, refused to join in the common cause (v. 23), just as Succoth and Penuel refused in the time of Gideon (viii. 5, 8). The first step taken, little progress was made for a long time; local feeling and tribal prejudice continued to resist any wide cooperation (viii. 1 ff., xii. 1 ff., 2 Sam. xix. 41). Neither David nor his successors achieved a lasting union of Ephraim and Judah, and it remained to the end of the monarchy an ideal cherished by prophetic minds (Hos. i. 11, Is. xi. 13, Jer. iii. 18, Ezek. xxxvii. 22). But the first impulse towards the development of a national life was given by the heroic faith of Deborah.

In the days which immediately followed her, the martial temper which she inspired seems to have died down. A spell of peace, perhaps something like lethargy, appears to have settled upon the Israelites of Central Palestine. But the latent vigour of the young nation only needed a leader to call it out; with a small force of his tribesmen, Gideon succeeded in driving the Midianites out of the country to the other side of the Jordan. The grateful people acknowledged the services of their deliverer by offering him an hereditary position of leadership which

would secure to them the protection of himself and his family in the future; and it is clear from ch. ix. that Gideon accepted it. Not that Gideon became in any sense a king of Israel; we must not suppose that his authority extended much beyond his own district. The house of Joseph, i.e. Manasseh-Ephraim, may have acknowledged him; in any case it is significant that the first attempt at a monarchy sprang up spontaneously in what was the real heart and centre of old Israel. The time, however, was not ripe even for a monarchy of this tribal character. The picturesque and highly instructive story of Gideon's successor, Abimelech, shews that the Israelites were not yet in a position of predominance; they might dwell with the Canaanites on terms of alliance, as at Shechem; but nothing was easier than to stir up mutual antagonism. Abimelech displays merely the narrow ambition of a popular demagogue, and not the slightest trace of any patriotic aim. Until Israel realized itself as a nation it could not be ready for the central authority of a king. The monarchy of Saul was hardly more than tribal; it was not until David had secured a firm superiority over the native population, and welded together, for a time at any rate, the divergent elements of the tribes, that the kingship became an established fact.

Between Gideon and Eli the fortunes of Israel are left vague or unrecorded. Neither Jephthah nor Samson stands out into the clear light of history. If Jephthah can only be described as a shadowy figure emerging from a background of fact, Samson hovers dimly in the region of myth, folk-lore, and reality[1]. Thus in passing from Judges to 1 Samuel there is a gap which the traditions do not allow us to fill. It has been suggested[2] that if we are to trace anything like continuity in the order of events, we must interpret Jud. x. 6—16, which indicates a condition of great distress, apparently due to the Philistines, as preparing the way for the victory of Samuel, or as looking forward to the rise of Saul.

C. *The religion of Israel during the period.* It is certain that the Israelites throughout the time of the Judges continued

[1] Kittel, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*[2], ii. p. 100.

[2] S. A. Cook, *Notes on O.T. History*, p. 127.

to serve Jehovah, whom they had worshipped in the desert, whose religion was proclaimed by Moses. The leading characters which appear upon the scene, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, are all worshippers of Jehovah, the God of the Hebrew tribes: in His Name they went into battle against their enemies, and on occasion united in a common cause. The ancient sources tell us of no national abandonment of Jehovah, nor of any deliberate adoption of a foreign deity. The later historian, indeed, treats this period as one of recurring apostasy, but he deals in generalizations, and gives no actual instances. It is not difficult, however, to see what he means. The settlement in Canaan brought with it profound changes, not only in social life but in religion, and to a great extent, at any rate on the popular level, the religion of the new-comers was assimilated to that of the natives. The God of Israel was a God of the desert, whose home was in the mountains of Seir, in Sinai, a God of wandering shepherds, served with the firstlings of the flock; in the hour of danger He was believed to travel on the thunderstorm from the desert to champion His people in Canaan (v. 4 f.). When the tribes entered the land, they found the native population serving local divinities, the Baals and Astartes of the cultivated soil, the givers of warmth and fertility, to whom was due the fruitfulness of the vine and the harvest of the cornfield. The instinct of early religion made it only natural for the Israelites, when they had learned to till the soil and win its produce, to bring their homage to the gods whom everyone around acknowledged as givers of the bounty. The Baal of a particular district was the *owner* of the land; and it was not all at once that Jehovah could be treated as the *lord* of Canaan. Accordingly a process of assimilation took place; it was found possible to adopt many practices of the native religion without giving up the service of Jehovah. In the course of time, as the Israelites became more established in the country, Jehovah Himself was regarded as the Baal; this explains how the name *baal* begins to appear in Hebrew proper names during this period, e.g. Jerub-baal, Esh-baal, Merib-baal (see on ii. 13 and vi. 32). The father of Gideon had an altar of Baal in his village (vi. 25, 30 f.); at Shechem

the alliance of Israelites and Canaanites evidently extended to religion (ix. 6, 46).

When homage was paid to the local divinities, the high-places with their altars must have been used by the Israelites. The more important centres of Canaanite worship, at any rate, such as Beth-el, Beer-sheba, Shechem, Ramah, Mizpah, Gilgal, Penuel, places of immemorial consecration, became sanctuaries for the Israelites as they had been for the Canaanites: patriarchal legends were attached to them[1], and in this way they were claimed as having been originally Israelite and used for the worship of Jehovah. Moreover the Israelites shared with the native population certain customs which belonged to primitive Semitic religion, such as the veneration of sacred trees (iv. 5, ix. 6, 37) and wells and stones (Josh. xxiv. 26) and *massēboth* ('pillars' RV.); the latter were at first, perhaps, large stones set up to mark a sacred spot, and in later times, it would appear, shaped and erected beside the altar[2]. The altar itself was formed of earth or rude stones, and on it were laid the gifts of produce, or the victim which was consumed by fire. Recent research in Palestine has discovered a good many rock-hewn altars, the surface of which is indented by cup-shaped cavities, possibly for holding or draining off the blood of the sacrifice (see on vi. 21, xiii. 20)[3]; these rock-altars were no doubt used both by Canaanites and by Hebrews. Kittel has suggested that, instead of vegetable offerings, the Israelites introduced the offering made by fire as a more spiritual type of service, in keeping with the nature of Jehovah. Of distinctly Canaanite origin was the *ashērah* or wooden pole, apparently a symbol of the deity, which in Ophrah, as elsewhere, stood

[1] Probably stories had grown up in connexion with them while they were still in Canaanite hands: but "we cannot tell how far such legends were transferred to the Hebrew ancestors, or how far they were of native Israelite growth." Skinner, *Genesis*, p. xii.

[2] A remarkable row of *maṣṣēboth* has been uncovered at Gezer; see the photograph in Kittel, *Studien zur Hebr. Archäologie*, 1908, p. 132, or Driver, *Schweich Lectures*, p. 63.

[3] See Driver, l.c. p. 66, where a plan of the rock-altar at Sar'a (Zorah) is given; also Kittel, *Gesch. d. Volkes Isr.*[2], ii. p. 114.

beside the altar of Baal (see on iii. 7). The sanctuary as a rule was open to the sky, but sometimes included a building (as at Shiloh and Shechem), and rooms for sacrificial feasts (1 Sam. i. 9, 18, ix. 22 ff.), and chambers in which the devotee passed the night to obtain a dream or divine communication (1 Sam. iii. 3 ff., xxi. 7, 1 Kings iii. 5).

In the routine of ordinary life the local sanctuary held a familiar place. Periodically, at the beginning and close of harvest, and at the vintage-season (ix. 27, xxi. 21), came round the agricultural feasts, celebrated with merry-making and dances. An orgiastic element certainly entered into Canaanite religion; one feature of it was the religious prostitution practised at the chief sanctuaries, and no doubt this exercised a degrading influence upon the Israelites (see on ii. 17). Now and then, perhaps only in times of special crisis or excitement, human victims were sacrificed; the whole story of Jephthah implies that such a horror was something exceptional, so much so that the occasion was celebrated afterwards by a special rite. In the mounds of Gezer, Megiddo, and Taanach, human remains have been found, sometimes deposited in jars, buried in the walls of dwelling-houses and beneath the corner of a temple; the bones are generally those of infants or children, and the situation in which they were found is commonly taken to indicate the practice of offering a human victim at the foundation of a building[1]. The excavations shew that the practice lasted well into the Israelite period, and at the same time that it was resorted to only on important and rare occasions. Another custom is referred to during our period, that of making religious vows. As the story of Samson shews, the votary lived under a special consecration, which was symbolized by letting the hair grow long. It did not necessarily imply any peculiar religious zeal, still less an ascetic pledge, but rather self-devotion like that of the warrior in a fierce age.

To what extent the Canaanites used images in their worship

[1] See however A. Jeremias, *The O.T. in the Light of the Ancient East* (Eng. tr.), i. p. 348, who emphatically denies this hypothesis. He maintains that the children were buried in houses etc., but not sacrificed. See also Driver, l.c. p. 69 *n.*

has not clearly been ascertained. No certain image of a Baal has been found; we do not know whether the countless small earthenware figures, apparently representing a goddess, which are turned up in excavations, were really figures of Ashtart; they belong to a widely-spread type, and probably were domestic *sacra*, like the terāphim; at any rate they did not form part of the furniture of public sanctuaries. The ephod, of which we hear in the story of Micah, was used for consulting the divine oracle; most likely it was Canaanite in origin (see on xvii. 5). It seems to be certain that images of Jehovah were to be found in some quarters, but by no means in every sanctuary; if we may judge from the evidence of a later time, Jehovah was symbolized by the figure of a bull-calf, not represented in human form. What the sculptured stones at Gilgal were, we do not know (see on iii. 19); in some way they must have been connected with Jehovah, for Gilgal long remained an important sanctuary of the Benjamites. The use of images marked a decline from the imageless worship which, according to tradition, was instituted by Moses.

The popular practice, then, closely resembled that of the native Canaanites; not that Jehovah was renounced, but He was worshipped along with the indigenous Baals, and in time as Baal. The distinctive character of Israel's religion tended to disappear amid influences and surroundings which were only too congenial to average human nature. But that it did not disappear is equally certain; for there were other influences at work, helping to preserve the higher faith. There must have been many besides Deborah for whom Jehovah was no Canaanite Baal, at home in the land, but a God whose dwelling-place lay in a different region. And it must be remembered that every Israelite victory was a victory for Jehovah, and produced a fresh conviction of His presence and power to help. The average Hebrew felt that Jehovah was superior to all the gods of the neighbouring peoples[1]. Yet even the

[1] The proper name *Micaiah* = 'who is like Yah?' (xvii. 1, 4, and LXX. cod. B throughout the narrative) implies as much. But we cannot feel sure that this was the early form of the name. The best attested form is

leading characters of the period, who upheld the purer religion, sometimes made concessions to the popular beliefs, as Gideon did; his setting up of an ephod is recorded as something strange, marking a new departure and a descent. Among anti-Canaanite influences some importance should probably be allowed to the nomadic or half-nomadic clans, such as the Kenites, who formed a considerable element in the population of Judah; along with their ancestral habits they cherished the simplicity of the nomad's religion; at any rate Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, struck a blow in the cause of Jehovah. No doubt, therefore, families were to be found up and down the country who clung to what was distinctive in Israel's faith.

Finally, the sanctuary at Shiloh, which, as it is not mentioned in the legends of the patriarchs, had probably never been in Canaanite possession, constituted the chief religious centre of Israel down to the time of Samuel; and it stood for the principles of belief and worship which may be traced back to the influence of Moses. It was served by a priesthood which regarded him as founder; the ark was kept there; and there at least Jehovah was worshipped without an image[1]. Next to Shiloh probably ranked the sanctuary of Beth-el as a home of the national religion. Thus while the process of assimilation was going on in the way described, there were forces at work which kept Israel sound at the core. When the moment came, as in the days of Deborah, for an appeal in the name of Jehovah, the people rallied to His cause; they admitted His claim on their allegiance as the God who had protected them in their wanderings and brought them to their new possessions. And Jehovah was no mere nature-god, but a spiritual Being, essentially moral, who demanded, unlike the Baals, a moral service of His worshippers. Had the God of the Hebrews been looked upon by the majority as little superior in nature and attributes to the gods of the country,

Micah (19 times in the narrative; so LXX. cod. A, Vulg., Pesh., throughout), and this may mean nothing more than 'who is like this child?' See Gray, *Hebr. Prop. Names*, pp. 156 f.

[1] "The fact that the worship of Yahweh was kept alive in the new territory says something for the priesthood of the day." Morison, *Journ. of Theol. Studies* xi., p. 215.

the religion of Israel would have shared the same fate as the religion of Canaan. As it was, the higher faith both survived and grew. The one fact which made it possible for the undisciplined nomad tribes to enter Canaan, and, in spite of many failures to hold their own against a dominant civilization, and impose themselves upon it, and in the course of time absorb it, was the common belief in Jehovah the God of Israel. However crude in its earlier stages, this belief contained the possibility of development; it was capable of advancing to higher levels; and in the strength of it Israel proceeded towards a larger destiny. The importance of any movement, religious or social, lies not so much in what it happens to be at a given period, but in the direction along which it is advancing. Considered in this way, the Book of Judges possesses a special value; to appreciate the state of religion which we find there, the true criterion is not the standard of a later age, but the degree of the advance towards it. Incorporated into the Book stands, it is true, the verdict of a later generation, and it is altogether condemnatory; nevertheless, however unhistorical the method of the compiler may be according to our notions, it enables us to judge for ourselves the actual advance which took place from the times of Deborah and Gideon and Micah to the age of the Deuteronomic school and the post-exilic editor. These religious historians were more interested in the moral of the history than in the history itself; and when we have made allowance for their treatment of the ancient stories we can recognize in their work an element of lasting value. It was their belief, and we share it, that the history of Israel from the earliest days was under God's control; that it illustrates the great principles of divine justice, retribution, and mercy; that the same Power which is active in all human affairs is here leading up to a larger issue than any other ancient history can shew.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

AND it came to pass after the death of Joshua, that the **1**
children of Israel asked of the LORD, saying, Who

PART I.

CH. I. 1—II. 5. THE SETTLEMENT OF THE ISRAELITE TRIBES IN CANAAN.

Apparently the narrative intends us to think of Gilgal, on the plains of Jericho, W. of the Jordan, as the place which the Hebrew tribes had reached in the course of their immigration; it was a sanctuary marked by the presence of the Angel of the Lord (ii. 1), and the chief encampment of the invaders. From Gilgal, therefore, we are led to infer that the tribes set out, either in small groups (i. 3, 16, 22) or singly (i. 30 ff.), to seek their fortunes in the land of Canaan. The language of *vv.* 2, 3 points to a previous allotment of territory which determined the general lines of the advance. Judah was the first to go up, with his allies the Simeonites; the minor clans of the Calebites and the Kenites also took part in the invasion. This group made their way into the Southern Highlands; but the Canaanites held Jerusalem and a line of strong towns running westwards to the coast, with the valleys and the plains; the Judahites were no match for them in regular warfare (i. 1 b—3, 5—7, 19, 21, 20, 10 b, 11—17; note the order). The historian's chief interest lies in Judah; he is less concerned with the exploits of the other tribes, or he had only scanty traditions at his disposal. When he comes to the house of Joseph, i.e. Ephraim and Manasseh, he records only the capture of Beth-el in the Central Highlands, and the names of the Canaanite cities which could not be taken (i. 22—29). Of the other tribes, Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, who advanced into the country N. of the Great Plain, no positive successes are mentioned; apparently they barely managed to gain a footing; the Canaanites were too strong for them (*vv.* 30—33). The Danites at first penetrated into the South West; but they were forced back into the hills between Judah and Ephraim (*vv.* 34, 35). In this manner the tribes entered Canaan: and the conclusion of the initial stage of the advance is marked by the going up of the Angel of the Lord from Gilgal to Beth-el (ii. 1a, *n.*); the religious centre is now transferred to a sanctuary in the heart of the land.

We gather, then, from this chapter that the invasion of Canaan was left to the individual enterprise of the different tribes, and that the

the conquest was only partially successful; in the plains and round the principal towns the Canaanites proved too strong to be dislodged. This version of the story is at variance with the account given in the Book of Joshua. It is true that in Joshua the broad features of the narrative (vi.—xi., xiv. ff.) indicate that the south of Canaan was the first part of the country to be occupied, while the northern tribes won their way only by slow degrees after the house of Joseph had settled in the centre; so far in agreement with the present chapter. Otherwise the contrast is strongly marked. Israel advances as a united nation under the leadership of Joshua, and defeats the Canaanites in two decisive battles, at Beth-horon and the waters of Merom (Josh. x., xi.); the Canaanites are exterminated wholesale (x. 40 ff., xi. 11, 14, 21); the entire country from Edom in the south to Hermon in the north (xi. 16 f.) is appropriated without further effort, and divided by lot among the tribes, after, and not before, the conquest (xiv. ff.). There can be no doubt as to which of these two versions represents the actual course of history. The Song of Deborah alone is sufficient to prove that the Canaanites, so far from having been exterminated, continued to be Israel's most dangerous neighbours (Jud. v. 6, 7, 19). It was a long time before Israel became fully master of the land; the chief Canaanite cities were not conquered till the days of David and Solomon; in the end, after the lapse of centuries, the original inhabitants were not annihilated but absorbed. On the one hand Jud. i. has preserved a record of the isolation of the tribes and the successful resistance of the Canaanites, facts which explain much of the history in the subsequent period; on the other hand the picture given in the Book of Joshua is an ideal one, drawn by the religious and patriotic fancy of a far later age.

At what period are we to place the events narrated in Jud. i.? The question seems to be answered by the opening clause, 'after the death of Joshua'; but this does not agree with ii. 6, where Joshua is still alive. The true sequel of Josh. xxiv. 28 is Jud. ii. 6—10, and i. 1 b—ii. 5 must have been added after ii. 6—xvi. 31, the Book of Judges proper, had assumed its present form. In order to connect this inserted narrative with the period of the Judges the final editor prefaced it with a remark of his own, which, however, is historically inaccurate. The natural place for a history of Israel's invasion of Canaan would be after the account of the tribes' entry into the land and the fall of Jericho (Josh. vi.); historically, therefore, Jud. i. 1 b—ii. 5 is parallel, and not subsequent, to the Book of Joshua. And in fact about a third of this section actually occurs in Joshua, sometimes in almost identical terms: thus Josh. xv. 13—19 = Jud. i. 10 b—15, 20; Josh. xv. 63 = Jud. i. 21; Josh. xvii. 11—13 = Jud. i. 27, 28; Josh. xvi. 10 = Jud. i. 29. In Joshua these passages are clearly not in harmony with their context, and appear to be extracts from some special source. They can hardly have been copied from Judges, for in several cases Joshua has preserved a more original text (e.g. Josh. xv. 13 f., 63) from which Judges has been altered; most probably, therefore, both drew independently upon a common document. This, we may suppose, was none other than the story of the conquest as given by J, the Jehovist or Judaic document of the

Pentateuch; for not only does the language of the extracts in Joshua agree with the J passages in Josh. i.—ix., but in Jud. i. we find the characteristic usages and treatment of this document, e.g. the resort to the oracle, *Canaanites* as the term for the original inhabitants, the prominence given to Judah, *the Angel of the Lord*, the whole tone of the narrative, which betrays nothing of the later theocratic bias. Jud. i. indeed contains little of the picturesque writing which usually distinguishes J, but this is accounted for by the fact that the editor has considerably abridged, altered, and re-arranged the original source; see notes on *vv.* 4, 7, 10, 19, 21 etc. It is probable that other fragments of the same ancient document are preserved in Josh. xvii. 14—18; Num. xxxii. 39, 41, 42; Josh. xiii. 13, xix. 47 (LXX.).

Among the tribes mentioned in this chapter Issachar, Levi, Reuben, Gad do not appear. It is curious that Issachar should be left out, because Jud. v. 15 shews that the tribe soon became numerous and important; the omission was perhaps accidental. Levi had probably sunk into insignificance (see Gen. xxxiv. 25—29, xlix. 5—7); Reuben and Gad being settled on the E. of the Jordan were not concerned with the conquest of the West. The original source probably did not mention Benjamin where the name now appears; see on *v.* 21. But in spite of alterations and omissions we have in Jud. i. an historical document of the utmost value. The reason why it was introduced here, outside the Book of Judges proper, may be found in the words which the editor puts into the mouth of the Angel, ii. 1 b—5 a. According to the original source the tribes did not completely conquer the land because they were inferior to the Canaanites in battle; according to the author of ii. 1 ff. it was because they were unfaithful to Jehovah. A belief had grown up that Jehovah had originally decreed a policy of extermination (cf. Ex. xxxiv. 11—16 J, Deut. vii. 1—5 etc.); this had not been carried out; hence the Canaanites remained as a standing menace and punishment. Such is the moral read into this piece of ancient history; and from this point of view the narrative is placed suitably at the outset of the story of the Judges.

1. *And it came to pass after the death of Joshua*] The events which follow belong, however, to the life-time of Joshua and to the period covered by Josh. ix.—xii.; moreover, the death of Joshua is recorded in chap. ii. 6—10, in due sequel to Josh. xxiv. 28. As referring to what immediately follows the words are therefore incorrect; but taking them in connexion with the entire Book they have a certain fitness, for the death of Joshua may be regarded as marking the division between the period of conquest and the period of occupation. In the same way the Book of Joshua opens with the death of Moses, Josh. i. 1 a. The sentence is an editorial addition.

asked of the LORD] most likely at the sanctuary, through the medium of the priest; cf. xviii. 5, 1 Sam. xxii. 10, 13, 15 etc. The ephod and the Urim and Thummim came into use on such occasions; the divine response was conveyed as a priestly oracle. See xvii. 3, xviii. 5, 1 Sam. xiv. 18 (RVm.), 41 (LXX.), xxiii. 9 ff., Dt. xxxiii. 8; and Driver, *Exodus*, p. 312 f.

shall go up for us first against the Canaanites, to fight against
2 them? And the LORD said, Judah shall go up: behold,
3 I have delivered the land into his hand. And Judah said
unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that
we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go
4 with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him. And

go up] From Gilgal, 800 ft. below sea-level, the march into the Southern Highlands (2500 to 3600 ft. above the sea) was a continuous ascent. The verb may be used, however, in a general sense, of a military expedition, 2 Sam. v. 19, Is. vii. 6.

first] of time, cf. x. 18; not *first* in order or rank.

the Canaanites] The Jehovist's name for the various tribes of Palestine; the Elohist calls them 'Amorites,' cf. *v.* 34. If the Canaanites had been extirpated in the manner described in the Book of Joshua there would have been no need to attack them again.

2—21. *The conquests of Judah.*

2. *the land*] Not the whole land, but the part which had fallen to Judah's lot.

3. *And Judah said unto Simeon his brother*] The personification of a tribe or nation is common in O.T. idiom, e.g. xi. 17, Num. xx. 14, Josh. xvii. 14 etc.; hence the tribal traditions often take the form of narratives about individuals. Judah and Simeon were both Leah-tribes, Gen. xxix. 33 ff. Owing to this tie of kinship, and still more to the fact that it was never strong enough to maintain itself as a distinct tribe, Simeon became merged in Judah. Its settlements were in the south, within the territory of Judah, Josh. xix. 1—7; in Josh. xv. 26—32, 42 these are even reckoned as Judahite. In Gen. xxxiv., cf. xlix. 5—7, Simeon appears in close alliance with Levi, also a 'brother' of the Leah-family; they attempted to settle in Shechem, but their treachery and violence ended only in disaster to themselves; Levi's career as a 'secular' tribe came to an end, and Simeon fell into a subordinate position. Though the date and context of this incident cannot be fixed with certainty, it probably comes within the present period.

my lot] The word implies a partition of the land by means of the sacred lot before the invasion; this would have taken place at the sanctuary (probably Gilgal) where the divine oracle was consulted, *v.* 1; cf. Josh. xvii. 14, 17, xviii. 6 JE. Perhaps some account of the allotment stood originally at the beginning of this document; traces of it may be preserved in Josh. xiv. 6 ff., xv. 1 ff. (Judah), xvi. 1 ff. (Joseph).

Simeon went with him] To reach his lot Simeon would have to pass through the territory of Judah.

4. This verse is made up of general phrases borrowed from *vv.* 5—7, with the addition of the 10,000—a common round number, iii. 29, iv. 6, vii. 3. The story of Adoni-bezek which follows has evidently been abridged; the editor has substituted a verse of his own for the

Judah went up; and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they smote of them in Bezek ten thousand men. And they found Adoni-bezek 5
in Bezek: and they fought against him, and they smote the Canaanites and the Perizzites. But Adoni-bezek fled; and 6

omitted clauses. Note that the verb *went up* is singular; Judah alone is mentioned, as in the other editorial verses, 8—10, 18.

5. *And they found*] The plural verb is the natural continuation of *v.* 3.

Adoni-bezek in Bezek] The chieftain's name was no doubt taken to mean 'lord of Bezek,' as though he were called after his capital; but *v.* 7 at least suggests that Jerusalem was his capital, not Bezek. No proper names in the O.T. are compounded with the name of a place; and by all analogy Adoni-bezek must mean '(the god) Bezek is Lord.' A god Bezek, however, is unknown. The double Bezek excites suspicion: *in Bezek* may be allowed to stand, because the context requires the name of a place; the error probably lies in the name of the chief. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Adoni-bezek here is the same person as Adoni-zedek in Josh. x. 1, 3, the head of the Canaanite confederacy which is said to have opposed the Israelite invasion after the capture of Ai. Advancing from Gilgal or Jericho the first stronghold to confront the invaders would be Jerusalem; and by correcting 'Adoni-bezek' to *Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem*, the form in which Joshua gives the text, we obtain the right situation for Judah's first encounter. The name Adoni-zedek (cf. the Hebrew Adoni-jah and the Phoenician Adoni-eshmun) means *Zedek*, or rather *Ṣedeḳ*, *is Lord*, Zedek being the Canaanite (Phoen.) god Συδὲκ (Philo Bybl., *Fragm. Hist. Graec.* iii. 569); cf. the Canaanite names Ben-ṣedeḳ (*Amarna Letters*, no. 125, 37 ed. Winckler), Ṣidḳi-milk (Cooke, *North-Semitic Inscriptions*, p. 349), Melki-ṣedeḳ Gen. xiv. 18, Ps. cx. 4. Probably the Hebrew scribes altered the name in order to introduce a distinction between the two narratives in Jud. and Josh.; 'Bezek' suggested itself from the context; and the whole name was given the erroneous meaning 'lord of Bezek.' The Greek scribes, on the other hand, identified the two names by reading Adoni-bezek both in Josh. and in Jud. (LXX.). Another way of accounting for the alteration is proposed by Moore: by changing Adoni-zedek to Adoni-bezek it was possible to give the name a contemptuous twist, 'the Lord scatters'; in Aram. *bezaḳ* = 'scatter.' The situation of the town Bezek is unknown, but it was probably near Jerusalem, *v.* 7 b. The Bezek of 1 Sam. xi. 8 = the modern Ibzik on the road to Bēsān, 14 m. N.E. of Nāblus, is too far north and outside the range of Judah's operations. Possibly the name has not been preserved correctly; Azekah (Josh. x. 10) is suggested as an improvement (Steuernagel, *Einwanderung*, p. 85).

the Canaanites and the Perizzites] Cf. *v.* 4; mentioned together in Gen. xiii. 7, xxxiv. 30 J; both appear in the lists of the seven nations of Canaan, e.g. Deut. vii. 1. What the difference was between them is

they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his
7 thumbs and his great toes. And Adoni-bezek said, Three-
score and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great
toes cut off, gathered *their meat* under my table: as I have
done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to
Jerusalem, and he died there.
8 And the children of Judah fought against Jerusalem, and

not known; 'Perizzites' seems to be a formation from *perāzî* = 'country folk,' 'inhabitants of unwalled towns'; perhaps the name was given not to a separate tribe, but to the Canaanites who lived in the villages or open country.

6. *and cut off*] A barbarity frequently practised in ancient warfare to mark the humiliation of the captives and prevent them from further mischief. Thus the Athenians are said to have decreed that the right thumb of every Aeginetan taken prisoner should be cut off 'that they may be incapable of carrying a spear, but not incapable of working an oar,' Aelian, *Var. Hist.* ii. 9.

7. *Threescore and ten kings*] *Seventy* is a round number; the sheikhs of the Canaanite towns were numerous, and they were continually fighting. Adoni-zedek was evidently a powerful and important chief among them, as is also implied by Josh. x. 1 ff. His words are not so much a savage boast as an acknowledgment of the irony of fate, and of the divine justice of the lex talionis.

gathered their meat] **used to pick up scraps**, like dogs (St Matt. xv. 27; *Odyss.* xvii. 309), while the master sat on the ground, or, as in Saul's time, on a seat by the wall, 1 Sam. xx. 25. The captives were not, of course, actually under the table, which was a low stand supporting a round wooden or metal tray for the food.

And they brought him to Jerusalem] The subject is naturally the same as in *v.* 6, i.e. the men of Judah, implying that Jerusalem was already in their hands; but *v.* 21 (see Josh. xv. 63) expressly states that this was not the case. Though the context does not favour such a construction, the subject may be taken as indefinite, 'men brought him,' 'he was brought,' i.e. by his servants. According to Josh. x. Adoni-zedek was king of Jerusalem; his title may have been omitted in *v.* 5, as noted above.

In the original narrative *v.* 7 was probably followed by *vv.* 19 and 21 (corrected), which continue the history of Judah, and therefore should precede the accounts of the subordinate clans (*vv.* 10—17, 20). After Jerusalem (*v.* 21), the next important place to be attacked would be Hebron (*v.* 10).

8. *fought against Jerusalem, and took it*] Jerusalem was not taken till the time of David; this verse contradicts *v.* 21 and the known course of history; see xix. 11 f.; 2 Sam. v. 6—9. We have here a late insertion, founded on a misunderstanding of *v.* 7 b, and designed to explain how the Judahites came to carry the wounded chief to Jerusalem.

took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire. And afterward the children of Judah went 9
down to fight against the Canaanites that dwelt in the hill country, and in the South, and in the lowland. [1]And Judah 10

[1] See Josh. xv. 13—19.

with the edge of the sword] An expression often used in connexion with the exterminating wars against the Canaanites, e.g. Gen. xxxiv. 26, Ex. xvii. 13 JE, Deut. xiii. 15 etc.

Verse 9 is merely a generalizing summary (cf. Josh. ix. 1, x. 40 D) from the same hand as *v.* 8, and from the same standpoint; note *went down*, i.e. from the high ground near Jerusalem.

in the hill country, and in the South, and in the lowland] A summary description of the land of Judah, cf. Jer. xvii. 26, xxxii. 44 etc. The entire central range of Palestine was called 'the Highlands,' lit. 'the mountain' (Deut. i. 7, Josh. ix. 1); it was divided into the Highlands of Judah, of Ephraim, of Naphtali, Josh. xx. 7; here the Highlands of Judah are meant. 'The South,' in Hebr. 'the Negeb,' i.e. 'the dry land,' was the tract of country S. of Hebron, between the Highlands and the desert which bounds the lower part of Palestine; it is sometimes called the Negeb of Judah, of the Kenites, of Caleb, etc. (*vv.* 10 ff., 16; 1 Sam. xxvii. 10, xxx. 14). This 'dry land' being in the south of Palestine, *Negeb* came to have the general meaning, 'south.' 'The lowland,' in Hebr. 'the Shephēlah,' is the region of low hills and plains on the W. and S.W. of Judah, sloping down from the Highlands to the sea; the list of Judaean cities in Josh. xv. 33—47 indicates the extent of this district. For 'Shephēlah' the original narrative uses the word 'valley' in this chapter, *vv.* 19, 34.

10. The conquest of Hebron (contrast Josh. x. 36, 37 D) is here ascribed to Judah as part of the general operations against the Canaanites (*v.* 9); later on, the Judahites, having taken the city, made it over to Caleb (*v.* 20). In Josh. xv. 14 J, however, Hebron is captured by Caleb; it was a victory over the Anākim, not over Canaanites in general; and such was undoubtedly the original version of the story. The editor here has altered the original narrative to fit his scheme of Judah's victories; this has involved the removal of *v.* 20 from its proper place before *v.* 10. Fortunately the parallel passage in Joshua helps us to recover the original form of the text:

Josh. xv. 13, 14, 15.	Jud. i. 20, 10, 11.
And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave [Hebron]†. And Caleb drove out thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak. And he went up thence against the inhabitants of Debir etc.	And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses had spoken: and he drove out thence the three sons of Anak (20), Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai (10 b). And he went thence against the inhabitants of Debir etc. (11).

† The words which intervene come from P.

went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron: (now the name of Hebron beforetime was Kiriath-arba:) and
11 they smote Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai. And from

Thus the whole of *v.* 10, except the names of the giants, is due to the editor. Arranging the text in this way we obtain a consistent narrative, a proper subject for the verb 'and he went' in *v.* 11, and the introduction of Caleb at a point which explains how he came to be speaking in *v.* 12.

Hebron] The modern el-Ḫalīl (=*the friend*), so called from its association with Abraham *the friend* of God, is the highest point in the Judaean Highlands, 3040 ft. above the sea. Its position made it the metropolis of the Negeb, which began a little to the south.

now the name of Hebron beforetime was Kiriath-arba] An archaeological gloss, cf. 11 b. The ancient name of Hebron is frequently mentioned by P, e.g. Gen. xxiii. 2, Josh. xv. 54 etc.; in Gen. xxiii. 19, xxxv. 27 P it is given as Mamre. Kiriath-arba=lit. 'city of four,' i.e. Tetrapolis, perhaps because the city was divided into four quarters inhabited by different races; cf. Tripolis on the Phoenician coast, founded by Tyre, Sidon, and Aradus. The word *arba* is not a proper name, as a late Jewish tradition took it, Josh. xiv. 15, xv. 13, xxi. 11; in all three places the LXX. has preserved the original reading 'Kiriath-arba the metropolis of Anak.' Burney in *Journ. Theol. Studies* xii. 118 f. explains the name as 'the city of (the god) Four'; he quotes Babyl. parallels for this usage; which, however, is questioned by some Assyriologists.

Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai] Either 'the three sons of the Anak' from *v.* 20 (cf. Josh. xv. 14) should precede; or we may place 'the children of Anak' after the names, following the LXX. here and Josh. xv. 14. The names may refer to families rather than to individuals; they look as if they were Aramaic. Sheshai (Ezr. x. 40) is connected by Sayce with the Shasu, i.e. 'plunderers,' or Bedouin of S. Canaan frequently alluded to on Egyptian monuments, though the forms are not philologically the same; cf. Sheshan in 1 Chr. ii. 31—35, a name belonging to this region. Ahiman 1 Chr. ix. 17 probably='brother of Mĕnī,' the god of fortune, Is. lxv. 11. Talmai is found in N. Arabia, in Nabataean inscriptions (C.I.S. ii. 321, 344, 348), and as the name of kings of Liḥyan, an Arabian tribe (Müller, *Epigr. Denkmäler aus Arabien*, nos. 4, 9, 25 from el-'Öla). The three giants are mentioned in connexion with the visit of the spies, one of whom was Caleb, to Hebron Num. xiii. 22, 28 JE. The spies travelled northwards from Kadesh; and Caleb, when he attacked Hebron, most likely also advanced from the south. The two expeditions cannot have been separated by any long interval of time, according to the narrative of J.

Underlying the story there seems to be a dim recollection of the fact that the various clans which in time grew into the tribe of Judah, the Calebites, Kenites, Jerahmeelites, entered Canaan, not from the E. after crossing the Jordan, but from the S. by advancing from Kedesh.

thence he went against the inhabitants of Debir. (Now the name of Debir beforetime was Kiriath-sepher.) And Caleb 12
said, He that smiteth Kiriath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. And Othniel the 13
son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife. And it came to pass, 14

11. *he went*] Originally, perhaps, *he went up* as in Josh. xv. 15; LXX. here *they went up*. The subject is *Caleb* in *v.* 20 restored to its proper place. Josh. xv. 15—19 describes the capture of Debir in almost identical words.

Debir...Kiriath-sepher] Probably ed-Ḍāharīyeh, 4 or 5 hours S.W. of Hebron, cf. Josh. xi. 21, xv. 50, and note the position of Anab. The K.-sannah of Josh. xv. 50 seems to be merely a corrupted form of Kiriath-sepher, i.e. 'book-town,' as the LXX., Vulg., Targ. ('Archive-town') understand it. Some MSS. of the LXX., and the Pesh., transliterate the Hebr. into a form *K.-sōphēr* which means 'town of the scribe,' and corresponds with the Egyptian name of the place, 'house of the scribe' (W. M. Müller, *Asien u. Europa*, p. 174). It has been suggested that the town was called Kiriath-sepher because it contained the record-office of the Anākim, or a library like those preserved in the great cities of Babylonia and Assyria (Sayce). Such fancies are spun out of a dubious etymology; for we cannot be sure that, in this proper name, *sepher* is the original pronunciation or even a Hebrew word. The original sense of Debîr is equally problematical; in 1 Kings vi. 5 etc. *debîr* = the adytum, lit. the hinder part (not 'the oracle'), of the temple.

12. *to him will I give Achsah*] Cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 25. The victor was to gain the hand of Achsah: the city too (it appears) became his.

13. *Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother*] The language leaves it uncertain whether Othniel was the nephew (LXX. cod. B) or the brother (LXX. cod. A, Vulg.) of Caleb; but tradition favours the latter alternative. Elsewhere, though in later documents, Caleb is styled 'the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite' Josh. xiv. 6, 14 D; Num. xxxii. 12 P. Kenaz was not the actual father, but the name of an Edomite tribe Gen. xxxvi. 15, 42; 'the son of Kenaz,' therefore, is equivalent to 'the Kenizzite.' Kenaz being a tribe, we must suppose that Othniel and Caleb were really clans belonging to it. As a tribal name Othniel may be compared with Israel and Jerahmeel. Caleb was closely connected with Jerahmeel (1 Chr. ii. 9, 25, 42, 49), a clan settled in the Negeb, S. of Caleb (1 Sam. xxvii. 10, xxx. 29), which, as the present narrative shews, settled in Hebron and the neighbourhood. How Caleb came to find a home in Judah is told in Josh. xv. 13 JE, cf. xiv. 6 ff. D. In the time of David Caleb was still distinct from Judah, 1 Sam. xxx. 14; but later on the clan became absorbed into Judah, so much so that in Num. xiii. 6, xxxiv. 19 P Caleb is the 'prince' of Judah, and the Chronicler knows of hardly any other Judahites outside the Calebite family (1 Chr. ii.). The present story gives the tribal traditions under the guise of a narrative dealing with individuals (cf. *v.* 3 note). Othniel is called 'the younger'

when she came *unto him*, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted down from off her ass; and
15 Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou? And she said unto him, Give me a [1]blessing; for that thou hast [2]set me in the land of the South, give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs.

[1] Or, *present* [2] Or, *given me the land of the South*

(not in Josh. xv. 17) brother of Caleb to account for his being of an age to marry Caleb's daughter, as in iii. 9 to explain how he outlived Caleb so long. The marriage indicates an alliance between the Othniel clan and an off-shoot of Caleb.

Contrast the account of the conquest of Debir by Joshua and all Israel given in Josh. x. 38, 39, xi. 21 D.

14. *when she came*] into her husband's house (Ruth iv. 11), or from the place where she had been kept in safety during the campaign (Moore).

she moved him to ask] Josh. xv. 18; but since Achsah herself asks the favour *v.* 15, it is more natural to read *he moved*, **instigated**, *her to ask*. The LXX. and Vulg. give this sense, but their evidence as to the original reading is not very decisive; nor is it easy to see why 'he instigated her' should have been altered to the present text.

she lighted down from off her ass] to shew respect (Gen. xxiv. 64; 2 Kings v. 21) and to beg a favour (1 Sam. xxv. 23). The meaning of the verb *lighted, descended*, only again in iv. 21 ('it pierced through' RV.) and Josh. xv., is inferred from the context. To this day in the East the traveller who begs hospitality, for instance, in a Bedouin camp is required to dismount and approach the sheikh on foot.

15. *a blessing*] i.e. *a present* as implying good-will, cf. Gen. xxxiii. 11; 1 Sam. xxv. 27 etc.

thou hast set me in the land of the South] *the Negeb* (*v.* 9 note), where the waterless district of Debir was situated.

springs of water] **Gullath-** or **Golath-maim**, so LXX. cod. A Josh. xv. 19, an ancient place-name, called after the springs mentioned further on: land in Palestine is valueless without springs. Gullath or Golath, pronounced Gulloth in the text, has the ending *ath* as in other old Canaanite names, e.g. Zephath, Baalath, Zarephath; the rendering 'springs' is conjectural; in Zech. iv. 3, 1 Kings vii. 41 f. the word means 'bowl.'

the upper springs and the nether springs] **Gullath-illith and Gullath-tahtith** (changing the plur. of the text to sing.), proper names, without the article. These must have lain between Debir and Hebron; if Debir is ed-Dâharîyeh, the springs of Seil ed-Dilbeh[1], 7 m. N. of Dâharîyeh, answer to the requirements. They are 14 in number, feeding a stream which runs for 3 or 4 miles and does not dry up. The springs fall into three groups, and may well correspond with *Gullath-upper* and

[1] Given in the P.E.F. large Map of W. Palestine, sheet xxi.

And the children of the Kenite, Moses' [1]brother in law, 16
went up out of [2]the city of palm trees with the children of
Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which is in the south of

[1] Or, *father in law* [2] See Deut. xxxiv. 3.

Gullath-lower. This attractive story was no doubt told to explain how the springs came to be in the possession of the Othnielites of Debir, when they ought by rights to belong to the clan of Caleb in Hebron; cf. the stories of the wells of Rehoboth and Beer-sheba, Gen. xxvi. 22—33.

16. The text of this verse has been badly preserved, and some details of the restoration must remain doubtful.

the children of the Kenite, Moses' brother in law] Marg. **father in law**, as O.T. usage requires. A proper name and the article (inserted by RV.) have fallen out before *Kenite*; LXX. cod. B restores *Jethro*, cod. A *Hobab*. The traditions differ as to the name of Moses' father in law; in J it is Hobab, Num. x. 29, cf. *ch.* iv. 11; in E it is Jethro, Ex. iii. 1, iv. 18, xviii. 1. As this chapter is related to J, the former is preferable: *the children of Hobab the Kenite*. The traditions differ again as to the tribe to which Moses' father in law belonged; here and in iv. 11 he is called a Kenite (see the note below), but in Ex. ii. 15 ff., iii. 1, xviii. 1, Num. x. 29 he is a Midianite. Common to both traditions is Moses' connexion by marriage with an Arab tribe. The verb *went up* in clause a is plur.; in clause b *went and dwelt* are sing., and may be corrected to the plur. (with RV., LXX. B *they dwelt*). But the sing. verbs in clause b perhaps imply that the text originally ran *And Hobab the Kenite...went up* (sing.)*...and went and dwelt*, omitting *the children of*.

the city of palm trees] i.e. Jericho, cf. iii. 13 *n.* and Deut. xxxiv. 3, 2 Chr. xxviii. 15. The order in which the stages of the invasion are mentioned, Jerusalem, Hebron, Debir, Arad, Zephath, seems to indicate a movement starting from the E. and advancing towards the S.; hence Jericho, in the neighbourhood of Gilgal (ii. 1), may well have been the point of departure. On the theory that Judah came up from Kadesh in the southern desert, a 'city of palm trees' has been looked for in the S., and Tamar, i.e. 'palm tree' (Ezek. xlvii. 19, xlviii. 28), in S.E. Palestine, is suggested as the place (Steuernagel, l.c. 75 ff.). The possibility that the Calebites and other clans which in time coalesced under the name of Judah, entered the land from the South has been noticed above, in *v.* 10.

the wilderness of Judah, which is in the south of Arad] **in the Negeb of Arad**. The wilderness of Judah (Ps. lxiii. title, St Mt. iii. 1, cf. Josh. xv. 61) was the barren, rugged tract which descends from the Central Highlands eastwards to the Dead Sea. It is possible that the term may have included Arad = Tell 'Arād, 17 m. S.E. of Hebron (cf. on *v.* 9); yet the description of the 'wilderness of Judah' (properly in the E.) as within the Negeb (in the S.) is surprising. The text is certainly incorrect. The LXX. cod. A reads 'into the desert of Judah, which is in the south, at the descent of Arad'; cod. B 'into the desert which is in the south of

17 Arad; and they went and dwelt with the people. And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they smote the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and [1]utterly destroyed

[1] Heb. *devoted.*

Judah, which is at the descent of Arad.' Both recensions of the LXX. give *the descent of Arad* (cf. Josh. vii. 5, x. 11 'the going down') instead of *the Negeb of Arad*; in the neighbourhood of Tell 'Arād the Judaean hills descend to the Wadi Seyyal on the E. and the Wadi el-Milḥ on the W., and thence to the plains. Following the LXX. cod. B we might restore 'into the desert which is in the Negeb of Judah in the descent of Arad,' which would give excellent sense; but we cannot feel sure that the LXX. represents the original text. Other emendations are: 'the wilderness of Judah which is in the descent of Arad' (Budde); 'into the wilderness of Arad' (Moore, omitting the rest as partly gloss and partly correction of the Hebr.); 'the Kenites went up from the city of palm-trees which is in the Negeb with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Arad' (Steuernagel). None of these is quite convincing.

with the people] gives no sense; read *with the* **Amalekite**, following a group of cursive MSS. of the LXX. which have 'with the people Amalek'; this agrees with 1 Sam. xv. 6, Num. xxiv. 20—22. 'While the main Judaean stock settled on the arable land and in cities, and intermarried with the Canaanites, the Kenites, true to their nomadic origin, turned into the wilderness of Judah, and dwelt with the Amalekites' (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geogr.*, p. 277 f.). The Kenites, who were related to the Kenizzites (Gen. xv. 19, xxxvi. 11, 15), seem to have been a branch of the Amalekites (Num. l. c.); they continued to dwell near Judah in the Negeb 1 Sam. xxvii. 10, on friendly terms *ib.* xxx. 29. In Jud. iv. 11 we find a family of them settled in the N., in the territory of Naphtali.

17. *Zephath*] Only here; the site is unknown. So far as situation goes, es-Sebaita, 25 m. N.N.E. of 'Ain el-Ḳadīs (Kadesh), would be suitable; but it has no philological connexion with Zephath (Ṣephath). The Canaanite name of the city which was known to the Hebrews as Hormah is not likely to have survived.

utterly destroyed] So the AV. and RV. render the verb, but RVm. **devoted**, lit. 'placed under the ban,' *ḥérem* RV. 'devoted thing,' AV. 'accursed thing.' Underlying the practice was the ancient principle of taboo; the *ḥérem*, as the Arabic meaning of the root shews, was something *separated* from common use, *secluded*, wholly made over to the deity and therefore inviolable. Hence in Arab. *ḥarâm* = *sanctuary*, the Moslem name of the temple area at Jerusalem; *ḥarîm* = *the women's chambers*; in Aram. dialects the word is used in various forms of a *sanctuary*, a *tomb* (Nabataean), *consecrated offerings* (Palmyrene). Among the Moabites we have an account of the practice which reads almost like a passage in the O.T.; King Mesha 'devoted' 7000 Israelite prisoners to 'Ashtar-Chemosh (Moab. Stone, lines 16—18). Among the Hebrews anything which might endanger the religious life of the

it. And the name of the city was called [1]Hormah. Also 18
Judah took Gaza with the border thereof, and Ashkelon
with the border thereof, and Ekron with the border thereof.
And the LORD was with Judah; and he drave out *the* 19
inhabitants of the hill country; for he could not drive out

[1] See Num. xxi. 3.

community was put out of harm's way by being 'devoted' to God, and whatever was thus placed under the ban had to be destroyed; e.g. the idolatrous Canaanites, or the idolatrous Israelite city, Josh. x. 1, 28 etc., xi. 11 etc.; Deut. xiii. 15—17; Lev. xxvii. 28 f. Instances of the practice are recorded in Josh. vii. 1, 22—26; Jud. xxi. 10 ff.; 1 Sam. xv. 3, 8 f., 15 etc.

Hormah] i.e. *devoted*; but the explanation given here and in Num. xxi. 3 JE is, perhaps, only literary. The name, like Hermon, Hŏrēm (Josh. xix. 38), can also mean *holy place*, and the character of the city as *sacred* or *inviolable* may have been due to some other cause. Hormah is mentioned again in Num. xiv. 45 JE, Deut. i. 44; in Josh. xii. 14 it comes immediately before Arad; in *ib.* xv. 30 it belongs to Judah, in xix. 4 to Simeon; it follows the cities of the Kenites on the list in 1 Sam. xxx. 30. Other traditions connected with Hormah, which differ from the present one, are preserved in Num. xiv. 45 and xxi. 1—3. In the latter fragment Hormah is 'devoted' after a repulse at Arad, by Israel, not by Judah and Simeon; it is implied that the former name of the place was Arad; and the episode is placed at an earlier stage of the history. It is best to recognize the differences; they can hardly be reconciled.

18. The statement that Judah captured three out of the five chief cities of the Philistines cannot be reconciled with any ancient tradition; it contradicts the next verse and iii. 3, Josh. xiii. 2 f.; it represents the unhistorical theory of the conquest which is found in verses 4, 8, 9, and like them must be regarded as the work of a late redaction. The LXX. reads 'and Judah did not dispossess' (a different word from 'took'), and other versions insert the negative; this seems to get over the difficulty; but the LXX. version here has little critical value. The expression 'with the *border* thereof,' instead of 'and the daughters thereof' (*v.* 27), betrays a different hand.

19. The natural place for this verse is after *v.* 7, i.e. after the account of Judah's first success in the Southern Highlands. **He conquered the hill country**, but the inhabitants of the plain were too strong for him. There is no one word for the Hebr. verb meaning 'drive out,' 'dispossess,' 'conquer.'

for he could not drive out] lit. 'for (he was) not for driving out,' a most unusual construction; correct *he was not able to drive out*, so two Hebr. MSS. and the Versions. The text of *vv.* 21, 27, 32 is to be corrected in the same way. Comparing *v.* 21 with Josh. xv. 63, *v.* 27 with *ib.* xvii. 12, 2 Chr. viii. 8 with 1 Kings ix. 21, we note a tendency to obliterate the impotence of Israel. In this chap. the editor's theory (ii. 1b–5a)

the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of
20 iron. And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses had
spoken: and he drave out thence the three sons of Anak.
21 And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites
that inhabited Jerusalem: but the Jebusites dwelt with the
children of Benjamin in Jerusalem, unto this day.

has influenced the alteration: the cause of the tribes' failure was not their inability to match the Canaanites, but their unfaithfulness (so Targum here).

the inhabitants of the valley] i.e. of the Philistine plain, between the hills and the sea; see *v.* 18 note.

chariots of iron] Cf. iv. 3, 13, Josh. xvii. 16, 18; i.e. plated or studded with iron, like the Hittite chariots figured on Egyptian monuments: the *currus falcati*, i.e. *scythed chariots*, as Vulg. renders, were not yet invented. The horses and chariots of the Canaanites were probably adopted from the Egyptians; but ultimately, like those of the Egyptians, from the Hittites or N. Syrians. Recent excavations confirm what we learn from the O.T. Thus at Taanach iron implements have been found in large quantities; at Megiddo they occur plentifully first at the period which is dated in the middle of the Israelite monarchy, also much earlier but in smaller quantities. In Egypt iron was in common use at the time of the Exodus, and considerably earlier; it came chiefly from the mines in the Sinaitic Peninsula.

20. See the note on *v.* 10.

as Moses had spoken] Num. xiv. 24 JE; cf. Deut. i. 36, Josh. xiv. 6—15 D.

the three sons of Anak] lit. *of the Anak*; the article shews that the noun is to be taken as a collective, i.e. as the name, not of an individual but of a tribe of people: similarly in Josh. xv. 13. These Anākites, or (*long-*)*necked* people, were a race of very tall men, for centuries remembered by the Hebrews, Deut. i. 28, ix. 2; they were specially associated with Hebron, Josh. xi. 21, xiv. 12, 15.

21. The sequel of *v.* 19, which again should come after *v.* 7. Originally, therefore, this verse closed the history of Judah; that of Caleb followed.

Instead of *Benjamin...Benjamin* Josh. xv. 63 has *Judah...Judah*, and for *did not drive out* it gives *were not able to drive out* (see *v.* 19 note); there can be little doubt that Josh. has preserved the text in its original form. The editor altered *Judah* to *Benjamin* in accordance with the theory of distribution which included Jerusalem in Benjamin's territory, Josh. xviii. 28 P; perhaps also he wished to find room for Benjamin in the present list.

in Jerusalem, unto this day] There were no Israelites in Jerusalem at the time of the Levite's visit, xix. 12. The writer's 'day' was after the capture of the city by David (2 Sam. v. 6—8), who spared the old inhabitants (*ib.* xxiv. 18 ff.); they and the new-comers continued to live side by side.

And the house of Joseph, they also went up against 22
Beth-el: and the LORD was with them. And the house of 23
Joseph sent to spy out Beth-el. (Now the name of the city
beforetime was Luz.) And the watchers saw a man come 24
forth out of the city, and they said unto him, Shew us, we
pray thee, the entrance into the city, and we will deal kindly
with thee. And he shewed them the entrance into the city, 25

22—29. *The fortunes of the house of Joseph.*

The account of the capture of Beth-el (*vv.* 22—26) has all the marks of antiquity, like the early fragments preserved in *vv.* 1—21. After the invasion of the South comes the invasion of Central Palestine, and, as this ancient version of the history shews, the two were independent of one another. The narrative knows nothing of such a leader as Joshua, though tradition connected him with the house of Joseph (Josh. xix. 50 JE, xxiv. 1 [Shechem], 30 E; Jud. ii. 9), and with the taking of Ai near Beth-el (Josh. viii.).

22. *the house of Joseph*] i.e. the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (Josh. xvii. 17); from 2 Sam. xix. 16, 20 it appears that the tribe of Benjamin was included.

they also] Just as Judah went up, *v.* 4.

Beth-el] The modern Bētīn, about four hours N. of Jerusalem, 2880 ft. above the sea, and high up in the Central Range (cf. iv. 5, xx. 18, 31 etc.). From Jericho the direct ascent to Beth-el must have passed Ai, the capture of which is recorded in Josh. viii.; but we are to think of a gradual process of occupation rather than of a campaign in regular stages.

and the LORD was with them] as He was with Judah, *v.* 19. The LXX. cod. A reads 'and Judah was with them,' most likely due to a copyist's slip; in Hebrew Jehovah and Judah differ in only one letter.

23. *sent to spy out Beth-el*] lit. *made a reconnaissance at B.* Perhaps we should read 'encamped against B.,' as LXX. and Vulg. imply.

Now the name...Luz] A gloss, as in Gen. xxviii. 19; cf. *ib.* xxxv. 6, xlviii. 3, Josh. xviii. 13 P. In Josh. xvi. 2 JE the two places are distinguished, 'from Beth-el to Luz'; but the text is uncertain, and in the LXX. the two are usually identified. Luz is supposed to mean 'almond-tree'; more suggestively Winckler proposes 'asylum,' from the Arab *lâdha* 'to seek a refuge' (*Gesch. Isr.* ii. 65 f.). If the latter is right, Luz may have been a sanctuary before it became famous under the name of Beth-el. According to JE the place was called Beth-el because Jacob set up a stone there after his vision when he fled from Esau (Gen. xxviii. 10—22); according to P, because God appeared to him there when he returned from Paddan-aram (Gen. xxxv. 9—15).

24. *watchers*] i.e. the Israelite outposts. The word favours an emendation such as 'encamped' in *v.* 23; cf. 2 Sam. xi. 16.

the entrance into the city] i.e. not the gate, but the point where the

and they smote the city with the edge of the sword; but
26 they let the man go and all his family. And the man went
into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the
name thereof Luz: which is the name thereof unto this day.
27 And Manasseh did not drive out *the inhabitants of* Beth-

city could be most easily entered by an attacking party. For the stipulation cf. Josh. ii. 12 f.

25. *but they let...go*] As Rahab and her kindred were spared, Josh. vi. 25.

26. *the land of the Hittites*] Cappadocia seems to have been the original home of the powerful, non-Semitic race of the Hittites, known to the Egyptians as *Ḫeta*. They are first mentioned in the inscriptions of Thothmes III (1500 B.C.), in whose time their empire extended southwards to the district of Kommagene, N. of Carchemish. Later on they pushed further south, into the upper valley of the Orontes. Throughout the period of the Tell el-Amarna tablets (c. 1400 B.C.) and of the Assyrian inscriptions from the 12th to the 8th cents. (Tiglath-pileser I to Sargon) 'the land of the Hittites,' *mat Ḫatti*, is in N. Syria. This is no doubt the situation intended here and in iii. 3 (corrected), Josh. i. 4, 1 Kings x. 29, 2 Kings vii. 6. Later writers, especially P, mention Hittites as settled in Central or Southern Palestine (Hebron), Gen. xxiii. 10 etc., xxvi. 34, Num. xiii. 29, perhaps using the term loosely for the original inhabitants of Canaan. We have no means of identifying the northern Luz. The tradition of its origin reminds us of the story of the northern Dan, xviii. 27 ff.

27—35. *The ill-success of the different tribes: they settle among the older population.*

From this point the form of the narrative changes. Hitherto successes as well as failures have been recorded, with ancient traditions of particular episodes; now follows a bare list of Canaanite strongholds which the new-comers failed to capture. Other towns may have been occupied by the tribes in their several districts; but in most cases the Israelites had to be content to settle down side by side with the old inhabitants. Again the Book of Joshua furnishes parallels and additions.

27. The parallel text, Josh. xvii. 11, 12, which has been adapted here and there to fit its present context, suggests that we should read *was not able to drive out* for 'did not drive out' (see on *v.* 19), and that Taanach and Ibleam should change places. The verse describes the limits of Manasseh's expansion northwards; a chain of hostile fortresses, stretching westwards from Beth-shean in the E. to Dor on the sea-coast, rendered the occupation of the Great Plain impossible. A similar line cut off Manasseh-Ephraim from Judah on the S. (*v.* 35), so that the two tribes were confined to the Central Highlands. *Beth-shean* (1 Sam. xxxi. 10, 1 Kings iv. 12), the Greek Scythopolis (LXX.), the mod. Bēsān, commands the main ascent from the Jordan to the Great Plain

shean and her [1]towns, nor *of* Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.
28 And it came to pass, when Israel was waxen strong, that

[1] Heb. *daughters*.

by the Nahr Jālūd. *Ibleam* may be identified with the ruined site Khirbet Bal'ame, about 8 m. S.E. of Taanach. The two towns *Taanach* and *Megiddo* (often together v. 19, Josh. xii. 21, xvii. 11 etc.) lay near each other on the road which goes westwards from Jenīn, skirting the S. of the Plain, which is sometimes called *the valley-plain of Megiddo* (Zech. xii. 11, 2 Chr. xxxv. 22). The former is the mod. Ta'annek, and about 5 m. W. of it lay Megiddo, in all probability on the site of Tell el-Mutesellim. Both towns are mentioned on the list of Thothmes III (*c.* 1480 B.C.); Megiddo also appears in the Amarna letters (nos. 159, 193—195) and in Assyrian inscriptions (Schrader, *COT*[2]., p. 168), for it guarded the pass by which Egyptian and Assyrian armies crossed the Carmel range into the Plain. Both these sites have recently been excavated, Ta'annek by Dr Sellin in 1902–04, Tell el-Mutesellim by Dr Schumacher in 1903–5, and have yielded results which illustrate many details of the religion and social life of Palestine from about 2000 to 100 B.C. See Driver, *Schweich Lectures* 1909, pp. 80—86, with illustrations. At Ta'annek were found several cuneiform tablets dating from the pre-Israelite period, *c.* 1350 B.C.; and at Megiddo a fine Hebrew lion-seal (illustrated in Driver l.c. p. 91), bearing the legend "Belonging to Shama', servant of Jeroboam," perhaps Jeroboam II, *c.* B.C. 783—743. *Dôr*, in Josh. xvii. 11 and in Phoenician more correctly D'ôr, lay near the mod. Ṭanṭūra on the coast, S. of Carmel; in Assyr. it is called Du'ru (Schrader l.c.). In order to continue the line consistently from Jordan to the sea, *Dor* should be moved to the end of the verse, as in 1 Chr. vii. 29, which seems to be copied from here (Moore).

and her towns] **and its dependencies**, lit. 'daughters,' cf. xi. 26, Num. xxi. 25, 32 JE etc.

would dwell] *v.* 35, Josh. xvii. 12 b, lit. 'resolved to dwell,' i.e. 'persisted in remaining'; cf. Hos. v. 11 'Ephraim...persisted in walking.'

28. By the time of Solomon these cities had become Israelite possessions, 1 Kings iv. 11 f.; it was probably David who subdued them, after they had been weakened by the Philistines. The latter were masters of Beth-shean in Saul's time, 1 Sam. xxxi. 10 ff.

taskwork] or *forced labour*. The word *mas* properly denotes a body of men engaged upon forced labour; here it is used of the Canaanites when reduced to subjection, cf. Dt. xx. 11; Is. xxxi. 8. As an institution in Israel, the corvée or labour-gang (employed in the East down to modern times) first appears at the end of David's reign, 2 Sam. xx. 24; it was further organized by Solomon for his public works, 1 Kings v. 13, ix. 15, 21. Though Canaanites may have been employed for the fortifying

they put the Canaanites to taskwork, and did not utterly drive them out.

29 And Ephraim drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.

of Megiddo and Gezer (1 Kings ix. 15), the levying of Israelites for this slavery was deeply resented, *ib.* xii. 4, 18. The word does not mean 'tribute.'

did not utterly drive them out] Even when subjugated, the Canaanites in many places continued to live among the dominant population, a constant danger, as the subsequent history shews, to Israelite religion and morals. The extermination of the Canaanites was but the theory of later times. Of the cities named, Beth-shean, for instance, harboured an alien population throughout its history; see G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geogr.*, p. 358.

29. Cf. Josh. xvi. 10.

Gezer] An ancient Canaanite city mentioned in the list of Thothmes III, in the 'Israel Inscription' of Merenptah (see *Ency. Bibl.* 1242), and as *Gazri* in the Amarna tablets (163 etc.), situated on the S.W. border of Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 3), near the Philistine territory (2 Sam. v. 25). It remained Canaanite until conquered by Pharaoh Shishak, who gave it to his daughter, Solomon's wife (1 Kings ix. 16). Solomon rebuilt the city as a frontier fortress against the Philistines (1 Kings ix. 15, 17). It was an important place during the Maccabaean wars (Gazara, 1 Macc. iv. 15, ix. 52, xiv. 34, xv. 28, 35 etc.). The site, = the mod. Tell el-Jezer, a little S. of the Jaffa-Jerusalem road and 13 m. from Jerusalem, was recovered by Clermont-Ganneau in 1871. Several bilingual inscriptions in Hebr. and Gk. have been found near the Tell containing the words "boundary of Gezer [Hebr.]: of Alkios [Gk.]," supposed to refer to the sabbatic limits and the local governor who thus defined them. See Cl.-Ganneau, *Rec. d'arch. Orientale* iii. §§ 25, 47. The excavations recently conducted on the site have thrown much light on the past history of Canaan; seven strata of successive occupations have been ascertained; the area of the Canaanite temple or high place, much pottery, and, in the Israelite stratum, the bones of infants built into the foundations of houses (cf. 1 Kings xvi. 34), and what has been identified as Solomon's work of fortification, are among the most important discoveries; see *Palest. Explor. Fund Qtly. Statements* for 1903, and Driver, *Schweich Lectures*, pp. 46—59.

in Gezer among them] Josh. xvi. 10 b reads 'in the midst of Ephraim unto this day and became subject to forced labour,' probably representing the original form of J; cf. *vv.* 28, 30, 33, 35.

30—33. *The Northern tribes settle among the Canaanites.*

We may conclude from this narrative that the northern tribes entered the country after Judah and Ephraim (so Josh. xviii. 2—10 JE), and independently of them. Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, were not strong enough to make any conquests; they could only settle among the older

Zebulun drave not out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the 30
inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among
them, and became [1]tributary.

Asher drave not out the inhabitants of Acco, nor the 31
inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of

[1] Or, *subject to taskwork* and so *vv.* 33, 35.

population; and the northern district remained, probably for centuries, only partially Israelite, 'Galilee of the Gentiles,' 'the heathen territory' (Is. ix. 1). In *vv.* 27—30 the Canaanites dwell in the midst of Manasseh, Ephraim, Zebulun; in *vv.* 31—33 Asher and Naphtali dwell in the midst of the Canaanites. According to P in Josh. xix. 10 ff. the cities which are said here to have remained Canaanite belong to the three tribes.

30. *Zebulun*] settled N.W. of the Great Plain, in Lower Galilee, between Asher and Issachar; see v. 14, Gen. xlix. 13.

Kitron...Nahalol] In Josh. xix. 15 Kattath...Nahalal; *ib.* xxi. 34 f. Kartah...Nahalal; the sites are unknown.

31. *Asher*] dwelt in a productive strip of country (Gen. xlix. 20), extending northwards from Carmel along the sea-coast (v. 17) to Phoenicia; P indicates the boundaries in Josh. xix. 24—31, but not many of the places can be identified. Occupying an indefinite territory between the Phoenicians and the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun, the Asherites seem to have been only partially identified with Israel; historically their importance was small, they took no part in the combination against Sisera (v. 17), and here it is implied that they could not hold their own against the older population. In the period of Seti I and Ramses II Egyptian sources mention *'A-sa-ru*, a somewhat vigorous state located in the 'Hinterland' of S. Phoenicia up to the Lebanon, the very district occupied by the tribe of Asher. 'Asaru is simply the Egyptian form of Asher; but until fresh discoveries reveal the nature of the connexion between the two, no safe conclusions can be drawn for purposes of history. It has been supposed that some part of the Israelite nation, at any rate the tribe of Asher, was resident in Palestine under the 18th Dynasty, i.e. *circ.* 1400 B.C., before the time of Moses. See W. Max Müller, *Asien u. Europa*, p. 236 ff.

Acco] is the mod. 'Akka (so in the Amarna tablets nos. 157—9), the S. Jean d'Acre of the Crusaders, N. of Carmel on the coast; in Acts xxi. 7 it is called Ptolemais, probably after Ptolemy II. This is the southernmost point on the coast in the present list; the northernmost is *Zidon*, the mod. Ṣaida, called Ziduna in the Am. tablets (nos. 147, 149, 150 f.), the famous Phoenician city. The Phoenicians are called Zidonians in the O.T., iii. 3, 1 Kings xi. 5; they were never subjected by Israel. It is significant that Tyre, which is situated between these two points, is not mentioned.

Ahlab] is probably only another form of *Helbah*, of which a third form is *Mahalab* Josh. xix. 29 (read 'from Mahalab to Achzib'). It seems to be the place called *Maḫalliba* by Sennacherib (Taylor Cyl.

32 Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob: but the Asherites
dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land:
for they did not drive them out.
33 Naphtali drave not out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh,
nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath; but he dwelt among the
Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the
inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became
tributary unto them.
34 And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the

*COT*²., 288), who mentions Achzib and Acco in the same line. It is conjectured (Moore) that this was the old name of Rās el-Abyaḍ, the 'promontorium album' of Pliny, three hours S. of Tyre.

Achzib] called Ecdippa by the classical geographers, is the mod. ez-Zîb, 2½ hours N. of 'Akka on the coast; Josh. xix. 29.

Aphik...Rehob] Josh. xix. 30, not uncommon names; in this region they have not been identified. Rehob (Josh. *ib.*, xxi. 31; 1 Chr. vi. 75) may be the Egyptian *Raḥubu*, N. of the Kishon (Müller, *As. u. Eur.*, p. 153); it is probable that both places were inland, not on the coast.

32. *did not drive them out*] Originally no doubt the text ran 'was not able to drive them out' (LXX.); see *v.* 19 note.

33. *Naphtali*] inhabited the eastern part of Upper Galilee; *v.* 18. On the S. the territory was bounded by Zebulun and Issachar, on the W. by Asher. It is curious that only two cities are named as having stood out against Naphtali; perhaps the list is not complete, cf. iv. 2 ff. (Hazor). Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath (Josh. xix. 38) i.e. 'temple of the sun(-god),' 'temple of (the goddess) Anath,' were Canaanite sanctuaries, as the names shew; their sites are unknown; possibly 'Ainītha, 6 m. N.W. of Ḳades (Kadesh of Naphtali), may be Beth-anath. Both names occur also in Judah, Josh. xv. 10, 59; *v.* 35 *n.*

became tributary unto them] **had to do forced labour for them.**

34, 35. *The fortunes of Dan.*

34. Dan, we may infer, attempted to settle in the N.W. corner of Judah, on the rich land ('the valley') between the hills and the coast. But the native population forced them back into the hills; in chs. xiii., xvi., xviii. we find Danite settlements at Zorah and Eshtaol in the Valley of Sorek (Wadi eṣ-Ṣarār), in *v.* 34 the places which Dan tried to occupy are in the next valley to the N., that of Ayyālōn (W. Selmān—Merj ibn 'Umar); these quarters, however, proved too strait for them, and, probably not long after the present period, a part of the tribe was driven to seek a home in the north (xviii.), where they are settled in the time of Deborah (v. 17). It is possible that the migration was due o pressure from the Philistines.

the Amorites] Elsewhere in this chap., as always in J, the pre-Israelite inhabitants are called Canaanites, while *Amorites* is the name

hill country: for they would not suffer them to come down
to the valley: but the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres, 35
in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim: yet the hand of the house of
Joseph prevailed, so that they became tributary. And the 36

used by E and D; the text of *vv.* 34—36 no doubt originally had 'Canaanites.' There is no sufficient reason to suppose that these verses come from a different document (cf. 34 with 19 'hill country...valley,' 35 with 27b, 23, 30, 33).

forced] The same Hebr. word as in iv. 3, x. 12 'oppress'; Am. vi. 14 'afflict.'

After this verse it is probable that Josh. xix. 47 (corrected), a verse which is clearly an insertion in its present context, followed in the original narrative of J: 'and the border of their inheritance was too strait for them (cf. 2 Kings vi. 1 in Hebr.), and the children of Dan went up and fought with Lesham (=Laish, xviii. 29) and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it and dwelt in it; and they called Lesham, Dan, after the name of Dan their father.' Perhaps this verse was struck out here, because the episode is narrated at length in the Appendix, ch. xviii. At the beginning of Josh. xix. 47 the LXX. seem to have translated a text which commenced with 'And the sons of Dan did not dispossess the Amorites...' If this sentence stood originally in the present document, it would conform *v.* 34, which begins abruptly, with *vv.* 21, 29 ff.

35. *would dwell*] See *v.* 27 note.

mount Heres] i.e. 'mount of the sun,' probably the same as Ir-shemesh, i.e. 'city of the sun' Josh. xix. 41, and Beth-shemesh, i.e. 'temple of the sun' 1 Kings iv. 9, both names occurring along with Ayyalon and Shaalbim in these passages. The site may be identified with the mod. 'Ain-shems, in the W. eṣ-Ṣarār, opposite Ṣar'a (Zorah).

Aijalon] Josh. x. 12, xix. 42 (in Dan), the mod. Yālō, on the S. side of the broad 'valley of Ayyalon,' now called Merj ('meadow of') ibn 'Umar, 14 m. W. of Jerusalem. According to the Chronicler the town was occupied by Benjamin 1 Chr. viii. 13, fortified by Rehoboam 2 Chr. xi. 10, and taken from Ahaz by the Philistines *ib.* xxviii. 18. The Amarna tablets mention it as Aialuna (nos. 173 and 180 'fields of A.'), and Shishak (1 Kings xiv. 25) enumerates it among the conquered cities of Judah, Aiyurun=Ayyalon (Müller, *As. u. Eur.*, p. 166).

Shaalbim] Cf. Josh. xix. 42, 1 Kings iv. 9. The situation of the mod. Selbīṭ is suitable, but the names are dissimilar.

prevailed] lit. 'was heavy,' as 1 Sam. v. 6, 11. The house of Joseph, i.e. the Northern Kingdom, whose boundaries reached these towns, reduced them to forced labour. They became Israelite possessions, however, before the division of the kingdoms, 1 Kings iv. 9; 1 Sam. vi. 12 ff. (Beth-shemesh).

36. *the border of the Amorites*] The text describes a boundary line; but there was no boundary between the Israelites and the Amorites, i.e. the old Canaanite population, for they occupied the same territory.

border of the Amorites was from the ascent of Akrabbim, from [1]the rock, and upward.

[1] Or, *Sela*

Some recensions of LXX. (cod. A, Lucian), Ethiop., Syro-Hex., read 'the border of the Amorite was the Edomite'; this suggests that the Hebr. text should be corrected to **the border of the Edomite.** The verse indicates the S. frontier of Judah which extended 'unto the border of Edom,' Josh. xv. 1.

the ascent of Akrabbim] i.e. 'the Scorpions' Pass' Num. xxxiv. 4, Josh. xv. 3, must be one of the chief passes which lead up from the 'Arābah S. of the Dead Sea, probably the Nakb eṣ-Ṣafā, on the N. side of the Wadi el-Fikra.

from the rock] Not 'from Sela' mg., for it is doubtful whether any city is called Sela in the O.T. The reference is to some conspicuous rock which served as a land-mark; Moore thinks of the cliff of eṣ-Ṣufēj, at the S.W. of the Dead Sea, and, omitting the prep. 'from,' renders 'to Sela.' But it is doubtful whether this cliff is sufficiently striking (Lagrange, *Livre des Juges*, p. 21), and we want a direction not eastwards but westwards. Accordingly the Rock at Kadesh ('Ain Kades, 50 m. S. of Beer-sheba) has been suggested; see Num. xx. 8. It is a "large single mass, or a small hill of solid rock" standing out conspicuously from the earth covered hills (Clay Trumbull, *Kadesh-Barnea*, pp. 272—4); moreover Kadesh-barnea is mentioned as one of the chief points on the S. frontier of Judah, Num. xxxiv. 4, Josh. xv. 3. But then why should the nameless Rock and not Kadesh itself be spoken of here? It is, in fact, impossible to be sure where 'the Rock' was. It cannot be Petra (LXX. etc.), the famous capital of the Nabataeans, for this is too far south.

The verse is obviously out of connexion with its context. As a description of the southern limit of Judah it would be in place after *v.* 16 (the Kenites) or *v.* 17 (Simeon); but we cannot feel certain as to its original position in the document. It is a mutilated fragment, and, since the southern limit of Judah was also the limit of Israelite territory, it was probably placed where it stands to round off the country occupied by the various tribes.

Ch. ii. 1—5. *The angel of Jehovah moves from Gilgal; he rebukes Israel's unfaithfulness. Origin of Bochim.*

This section connects with ch. i. The going up of the Angel of Jehovah from Gilgal to Beth-el marks the close of the period of invasion (ii. 1 a); the settlement of the tribes in Canaan involves a transference of the sanctuary (ii. 5 b); the intervening verses (1 b—5 a) connect the preceding narrative with the History of the Judges (ii. 6—xvi. 31). The latter verses were probably composed by the post-exilic editor who introduced ch. i. into its present place, not by the author of the Introduction ii. 6—iii. 6; contrast, for example, ii. 3 with ii. 22 f., and again with iii. 1—3. The appeal to past history, and the tone of

And [1]the angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to 2
Bochim. And he said, I made you to go up out of Egypt,
and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto

[1] Or, *a messenger*

remonstrance upbraiding Israel's neglect to exterminate the Canaanites, betray the later historian. Most of the phrases in *vv.* 1b—5a are borrowed from earlier writings.

1. *the angel of the LORD*] Not a prophet, as the Targ. and Rabbis interpret, and the LXX. and Pesh. seem to imply when they insert the prophetic formula 'thus saith the Lord,' but the Angel who had led Israel to the Promised Land, Ex. xxiii. 20—23, xxxii. 34, xxxiii. 2. This Angel was the self-manifestation of Jehovah, sometimes identified with Jehovah as here and Gen. xxxi. 13 cf. 11, Ex. iii. 6 cf. 2, and alluded to as *God* or *Jehovah* Jud. vi. 14 cf. 12, xiii. 21 cf. 22; at other times distinguished from Jehovah Gen. xvi. 11, xix. 13, Num. xxii. 31; though "the only distinction implied is between Jehovah and Jehovah in manifestation" (A. B. Davidson in *HDB.* i. 94).

from Gilgal] where the mysterious appearance of 'the captain of the host of the Lord' had taken place, Josh. v. 13 ff. Gilgal, on the plains of Jericho, was the first halting-place (Josh. iv. 19) of the tribes on the W. of Jordan, and for some time their camp, Josh. ix. 6, x. 6 ff., 15, 43, xiv. 6. The name denotes not *rolling*—the explanation given in Josh. v. 9 is merely a word-play—but a sacred *circle* of stones such as existed in other parts of the country; it has survived in the mod. Birket Jiljuliyeh, near Jericho. The presence of the Angel shews that Gilgal was a sanctuary; as at Sinai, the Deity manifests Himself where He has His dwelling-place. In the 8th cent. Gilgal was still much frequented, Hos. iv. 15, ix. 15, xii. 11; Am. iv. 4, v. 5.

to Bochim] lit. 'to the Weepers'; but here the name anticipates the account of its origin given in *v.* 4 f.; we should expect the older, well known, name to come first. There is little doubt that we should substitute **to Beth-el**, following the LXX. *ἐπὶ τὸν κλαυθμῶνα* [i.e. Bochim] *καὶ ἐπὶ βαιθὴλ καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰσραήλ*: 'to Bochim and' has been inserted to harmonize with the Hebr. text; 'to Beth-el' is original; 'and to the house of Israel' is suspiciously like a corrupt repetition of 'to Beth-el,' though in the form 'and to the house of Joseph' some critics would restore it to the Hebr. text. The sequel of this half of the verse is 5b 'and they sacrificed there unto the Lord.'

I made you to go up] The Hebr. has 'I make you to go up,' an historic present; but the tense, followed by 'and I have brought you,' cannot be right. The versions insert 'Thus saith the Lord,' without removing the difficulty. It has been proposed to read '*I surely visited you and made* you to go up,' after Ex. iii. 16 f.; this at any rate is good grammar. For the expression cf. vi. 8; Lev. xi. 45 P; Deut. xx. 1; Josh. xxiv. 17 E.

the land which I sware unto your fathers] The oath sworn to the forefathers (Gen. xxii. 16 f., cf. xxvi. 3 f. JE) is frequently referred to

your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant
2 with you: and ye shall make no covenant with the inhabitants
of this land; ye shall break down their altars: but ye have
not hearkened unto my voice: why have ye done this?
3 Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before

in JE, Gen. l. 24; Ex. xiii. 5, 11, xxxii. 13, xxxiii. 1; Num. xi. 12, xiv. 16, 23, xxxii. 11; Deut. xxxi. 20 f., xxxiv. 4; and particularly in D, e.g. Deut. i. 8, 35, vi. 10, 18, 23 etc., Josh. i. 6, v. 6 etc.—in Deut.–Josh. thirty-three times altogether. The promise is given in Gen. xii. 7, xiii. 14 f., xv. 18 ff. (Abraham), xxvi. 3 f. (Isaac), xxviii. 13 f. (Jacob).

I will never break my covenant] The allusion is not to the 'oath sworn to the forefathers,' but, as the phrases in the next verse shew, to the covenant at Sinai, Ex. xxxiv. 10 ff. For the expression cf. Deut. xxxi. 16, 20 JE; Lev. xxvi. 44, Gen. xvii. 14 P; it is used rather frequently in the later prophetic style, e.g. Is. xxiv. 5, Jer. xi. 10, Ezek. xliv. 7 etc.

2. *this land*] After 'this land' the LXX. inserts 'nor shall ye worship their gods, but their graven images ye shall break to pieces,' an addition of no critical value.

break down their altars] Ex. xxxiv. 13; cf. Deut. vii. 5, xii. 3.

hearkened unto my voice] Cf. Ex. xxiii. 21 f., where the 'voice' is that of the Angel who was to lead Israel into Canaan.

why have ye done this?] **what have you done**, with emphasis on 'what'; cf. xv. 11, Gen. iii. 13 etc. The reproof is grounded upon Israel's failure to exterminate the Canaanites. In the ancient narrative, ch. i., Israel's failure is due to inferiority in battle; here it is ascribed to neglect of religious duty. The command to refuse all alliances with the native inhabitants, and to drive them out, is found in the old legislation (Ex. xxiii. 31—33, part of the 'Book of the Covenant,' and xxxiv. 12 J), and thence incorporated into the Deuteronomic Code (Dt. vii. 2—4, 16, xii. 29—31, xx. 16—18). This law originated at a period, long after the original occupation of Canaan, when it could no longer be obeyed literally; it stood, therefore, for an ideal, and witnesses to an intense conviction of the distinctive character of Israel's religion, and to the constant danger which threatened it from contact with the Canaanites. The Books of Kings and the prophets give ample evidence of the deteriorating effect of Canaanite influences; and it is to be noted that the Codes which deal with this topic belong to the period before the exile.

3. *Wherefore I also said*] **Moreover also I said**; perhaps referring to the warning in Josh. xxiii. 13 D, Num. xxxiii. 55 P, from which latter place the expressions in this verse appear to be borrowed. Others translate 'and I have also said,' a present resolve in antithesis to the past promise 'And I said, I will never break' etc. in *v.* 1 b; but the antithesis is hardly to be extracted from the Hebr.

they shall be as thorns *in your sides*] Supplying 'as thorns' from

you; but they [1]shall be [2]*as thorns* in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. And it came to pass, when the 4
angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept. And they called the name of that place [3]Bochim: and they 5
sacrificed there unto the LORD.

[1] Some ancient versions have, *shall be adversaries unto you.*
[2] See Num. xxxiii. 55. [3] That is, *Weepers.*

Num. xxxiii. 55, to make sense; cf. Josh. xxiii. 13 'thorns in your eyes'; the word 'as thorns' may have been omitted here by accident. Instead of 'they shall be sides (!) unto you' (*ṣiddim*) the Vulg. and Targ. have 'they shall be adversaries' (*ṣarim*); the LXX., taking *ṣarim* as = *ṣaroth*, render 'straits,' 'distresses,' so Vet. Ital. in angustias, in pressura: these are probably only conjectures. It has been proposed to pronounce *ṣiddim* 'sides' as *ṣaddim*, and give it the sense of the Assyrian *ṣaddu* 'a net, trap'; this would make a good parallel to 'snare' at the end of the verse; but the Assyr. form is not quite certain (? *zaddu*).

their gods...a snare unto you] Cf. Ex. xxiii. 33, xxxiv. 12; Deut. vii. 16; Josh. xxiii. 13.

4. *unto all the children of Israel*] although, as ch. i. has told, the tribes were dispersed in their various settlements. The expression, as indeed the whole situation presupposed in *vv.* 1b—5a, is influenced by later conceptions of national unity; cf. the editorial passages vi. 8, x. 11.

lifted up their voice, and wept] Similarly at Beth-el xxi. 2.

5. *Bochim*] i.e. 'Weepers.' The author sees in this name of the place a recollection of the Angel's reproof and the people's repentance But such a form as Bochim, active ptcp. plur., is very unusual in a place name, and it has probably been adapted to suit the present occasion. Originally the name may have been Bekaim 'balsam-trees,' cf. 2 Sam. v. 23f.; Ps. lxxxiv. 6 (see RVm.).

and they sacrificed there] i.e. in Beth-el; see on *v.* 1a, to which this sentence belongs. The appearance of the Angel consecrates the place, and an altar henceforward marks it as a sanctuary; cf. vi. 24, xiii. 15—20, 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 18. Another ancient tradition carried back the consecration of Beth-el to the times of the patriarch Jacob, Gen. xxviii., xxxv.; according to the later view of the Priestly writer the religious centre of Israel was not at Beth-el, but at Shiloh, Josh. xviii. 1, xix. 51; cf. *ch.* xxi. 12 *n.*

PART II.

CH. II. 6—XVI. 31. THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL UNDER THE JUDGES.

Ch. ii. 6—iii. 6. *Introduction.*

By way of general introduction to the Book of Judges proper, the section ii. 6—iii. 6 takes a survey of the period from the death of Joshua to the death of Samson. It starts with a reference to the close of the

6 Now when Joshua had sent the people away, the children
of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess
7 the land. [1]And the people served the LORD all the days of

[1] See Josh. xxiv. 29—31.

preceding era, ii. 6—10; and then goes on to indicate the religious significance of the period which follows, ii. 11—iii. 6. It is not, however, a simple uniform composition of one writer. The history is interpreted from more than one point of view, especially that dominant feature of the age of the Judges—Israel's wars with the native races. First (*a*) comes the theory of the Deuteronomic author, expressed in his characteristic phraseology (see Introduction § 2 A (*a*)), ii. 7, 10—12, 14—16, 18, 19: no sooner had Joshua and his contemporaries passed away (*vv.* 7, 10), than the Israelites began to neglect their national God, and *go after other gods* among *the peoples round about them* (*vv.* 11, 12); as a punishment they were *sold into the hand* of their enemies (*v.* 14); then they cried to the Lord for help, and He *raised up* a deliverer or judge (*v.* 16), but the deliverance was only followed by a fresh relapse (*vv.* 18, 19). Apostasy, subjugation, the appeal to Jehovah, the deliverance, repeated again and again, such was the dark outline of the history, to be filled in by the narratives which follow, iii. 7 ff. Then (*b*) in ii. 20—22 we have a different view; Israel's sin lay in worshipping the gods of *Canaan* (*v.* 13); the nations *in the midst* of Israel were not driven out (*vv.* 20, 21); they were spared in order to *test* Israel's moral strength (*v.* 22); and Israel did not stand the test (iii. 5, 6). Again (*c*) Jehovah left the nations in order to *teach* Israel the art of war (iii. 1—3); there is no question here of moral reasons for the survival of the native population. It will be noticed further that ii. 13 is a repetition of *v.* 12, *v.* 18 f. of *v.* 16, *v.* 20a of 14a; *v.* 23 'neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua' can hardly come from the author of *v.* 21, which speaks of Joshua's death; the two lists of nations in iii. 3 and *v.* 5 are inconsistent (see notes). It is clear, then, that the introduction in its present form is the work of several hands. The oldest element is no doubt the nucleus of iii. 1—3 (the nations left to teach Israel war); this forms a link with i. 1—ii. 5 and belongs to the same historical standpoint; it may be attributed to J. In ii. 6, 8, 9 we have an extract from E (Josh. xxiv. 28, 29, 30), to which source may be assigned *vv.* 13, 20—22, iii. 5, 6. The handiwork of D has already been traced in *vv.* 7, 10, 12, 14—16, 18, 19. The remaining verses, 17, 23, the larger part of iii. 1—3, iii. 4, are editorial expansions and adaptations of various dates. There is some difference of opinion among critics as to the sources of several details, and the analysis is not everywhere certain; but the main distinctions are evident. Apparently a writer of the school of E formed a collection of stories and furnished it with a preface before the Deuteronomic author took up the Book and composed his introduction; see pp. xviii—xx.

6. *had sent the people away*] *and J.* **sent** *the people away* (exactly as Josh. xxiv. 28) from the great assembly at Shechem, at which the

Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the LORD, that he had wrought for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant 8 of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in 9 Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, on the north of the mountain of Gaash. And also all that generation 10

covenant had been renewed, and Joshua had delivered his parting exhortations, Josh. xxiv. 1—27 E. The words were allowed to stand here in spite of their inconsistency with i. 1. Verses 6—9 = Josh. xxiv. 28, 31, 29, 30, with minor alterations to suit the opening of a new book.

7. *the elders*] or sheikhs, who, as the head men of families and clans, would take a leading part in maintaining the customs and religion of the people.

that outlived] lit. 'that prolonged days after,' a common expression in Deut., e.g. iv. 26, 40, v. 33, xi. 9 etc.

all the great work of the LORD] So Deut. xi. 7; referring to the exodus, the wandering, the invasion, here, as in Deut. xi. 2—7, regarded as having taken place within the life-time of one generation (Moore); instead of *seen*, Josh. xxiv. 31 has the more general term *known*. This verse (= Josh. xxiv. 31, where it seems to have been adopted from here) clearly comes from the hand of D; its position in the present extract from Josh. xxiv., disturbing the sequence of *vv.* 6,8, 9, shews it to be a later insertion into the narrative of E.

8. *the servant of the LORD*] Though not limited to Moses, this title is most frequently given to him, Dt. xxxiv. 5, Josh. i. 1, and often in the Dtc. parts of Joshua. It is now transferred, with the leadership, to Moses' successor. For Joshua's age at his death cf. Gen. l. 26.

9. *in the border of his inheritance*] i.e. within the district allotted to him, Josh. xix. 49.

Timnath-heres] An early tradition, mentioned by Eusebius (*Onom. Sacr.* 261, 33) and Jerome, pointed out the tomb of Joshua at Thamna, a fortified place of some importance in Maccabaean and Roman times (1 Macc. ix. 50; Jos., *Ant.* xiv. 11, 2, *War* iv. 8, 1), which, from the topographical notices of Josephus ll. cc., may be identified with the modern Tibneh, about 10 m. N.W. of Beth-el, in the Central Highlands. It is not unlikely that this was Timnath-ḥeres; remarkable tombs are still to be seen on the N. slope of the hill to the S.W. of the town. A later, mediaeval, tradition fixes the site at Hāris, about 9 m. S.W. of Shechem (Nāblus). Timnath-ḥeres, lit. '(sacred) territory of the Sun' (cf. Mount Heres i. 35, Beth-shemesh), is written Timnath-serah in Josh. xix. 50, xxiv. 30, and by Syr. and Vulg. here, perhaps to avoid idolatrous associations; cf. Is. xix. 18, where *heres* 'sun' has been changed to *heres* 'destruction.'

Gaash] has not been identified; 2 Sam. xxiii. 30 = 1 Chr. xi. 32 mention 'the wadis of G.'

were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the work which he had wrought for Israel.

11 And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the
12 sight of the LORD, and served the Baalim: and they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the peoples that were round about them, and bowed themselves down unto them: and they provoked the LORD

10. *were gathered unto their fathers*] This expression (as here only in 2 Kings xxii. 20=2 Chr. xxxiv. 28), and the commoner 'was gathered unto his people' (P), referred originally to the family sepulchre; then to the shadowy life of Sheol, the Underworld; finally it was used as a euphemism for death.

which knew not the LORD] in the sense in which the previous generation had known Him, by personal experience of His *work*, see *v.* 7. According to this writer the death of Joshua marked a cleavage between the age of faith and the age of deterioration; the prophets Hosea (ix. 10 ff.) and Ezekiel (xvi.) take an even gloomier view.

11. The Deuteronomist's rationale of the period of the Judges begins here. He starts with one of his recurring formulae, *did evil in the sight of the LORD*, iii. 7, 12, iv. 1, vi. 1, x. 6, xiii. 1; 1 Kings xi. 6, xiv. 22 and often; Deut. iv. 25, ix. 18 etc.

and served the Baalim] See on *v.* 13. The words anticipate the 'forsaking of the Lord' in *v.* 12, and RD's account of the false worship in iii. 7; they look like a gloss on the first half of the verse.

12. Each phrase of this verse is characteristic of the Deuteronomic school; thus *they forsook the LORD* x. 6, 10, 13, Dt. xxviii. 20, frequently in the Dtc. parts of Kings and in Jeremiah, see also the next verse; *the God of their fathers* Dt. i. 11, 21, iv. 1, vi. 3, xii. 1 etc.; *followed other gods* ii. 19, Dt. viii. 19, xi. 28, xiii. 2 etc., Jerem. vii. 6, xi. 10 etc.; *the peoples round about them* i.e. not the Canaanites remaining in the midst of Israel, but the nations outside its frontiers, Dt. vi. 14, xiii. 8; *provoked the LORD to anger* Dt. iv. 25, ix. 18 etc., and often in Dtc. passages in Kings, and in Jerem.

which brought them out of the land of Egypt] Both in the Law (Ex. xx. 2; Dt. v. 6) and in the Prophets (Am. ii. 10; Hos. xii. 13, xiii. 4; Mic. vi. 4), the appeal is to the Exodus, as the birth-day of Israel's religious life, a signal manifestation of Jehovah's special providence, which carried with it His claim on Israel's allegiance.

13. This verse repeats the substance of *v.* 12; it continues *v.* 10 and leads on to *v.* 20. The repetition is explained if the verse belongs to E; for the expression *forsook the LORD* in E cf. Josh. xxiv. 20, Dt. xxxi. 16.

served Baal and the Ashtaroth] Once settled in Canaan, the Israelites could not resist the temptation to adopt the worship of the native deities, on whom the prosperity of flocks and fields was supposed to depend.

to anger. And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal 13
and the Ashtaroth. And the anger of the LORD was kindled 14

The God of Israel came from the desert; in the early days of the settlement His home was believed to be in Sinai rather than in Canaan (v. 4 f.); hence the popular religion, without ceasing to regard Jehovah as the God of Israel, felt it necessary to pay homage at the same time to the gods of the country. No doubt also the popular mind tended to identify Jehovah with the local Baals and Astartes, whose sanctuaries were scattered over the land. Such confusions gravely imperilled the distinctive character of Israel's religion; they produced a degradation of faith and morals which led the prophets, and writers of the schools of E and D, stirred by the painful evidence of a later age, to charge Israel with having fallen into Baal-worship from the very day they entered into Canaan; the popular religion could only be described as a 'forsaking' of Jehovah.

Baal] means lit. *owner*, *possessor*, e.g. of a house xix. 22, of a town ('citizens') ix. 2, of a wife ('husband') Ex. xxi. 3 etc.; applied to divine beings it is a title conveying the idea of *ownership*, or, less probably, of *domination*. There was no one god called Baal; each considerable town or district had its deity, the *lord* of that particular place. Hence the O.T. speaks of Baal (sing.) in a collective sense, as here and Hos. xiii. 1, Jer. xi. 13 etc., or of Baālim (plur.) *v.* 11, iii. 7, viii. 33 etc., meaning the aggregate of local or special Baals. The local Baal is often designated by the name of his town or sanctuary, e.g. B. of Hermon iii. 3, B. of Tamar xx. 33, B. of Meon Num. xxxii. 38 and Moab. Stone ll. 9, 30; or of some special aspect under which he was worshipped, e.g. B. of the covenant viii. 33, ix. 4, B. of flies 2 Kings i. 2 ff.; at Baal-Gad under Mt Hermon he was worshipped as Gad, the god of fortune. These usages are abundantly illustrated by the Phoenician and Aramaic inscriptions; e.g. we hear of the B. of Zidon, of Tyre, of Lebanon, of Tarsus; occasionally the actual name of the Baal is known—the B. of Tyre was Melḳarth, the Baalath (fem.) of Gebal was 'Ashtart, the B. of Ḥarran was Sin; we meet with Baal under various aspects, e.g. 'glowing' (*ḥammān*), 'healing' (*marpē*), 'dancing' (*marḳōd*), 'of the heavens' (*shāmēm*). Baal was a title of the deity who owned the land, the god of the cultivated field and its produce (see Hos. ii. 5), of fertilizing warmth, perhaps, but not a sun-god. As denoting *owner*, *lord*, the title could be applied in a harmless sense to Jehovah Himself; this is seen in the proper names Jerubbaal vi. 32 (note), Baal-yah 1 Chr. xii. 5, one of David's mighty men, and, in the families of Saul and David, Esh-baal, Merib-baal, Beel-yada, 1 Chr. viii. 33, 34, xiv. 7, altered to Ish-bosheth, Mephi-bosheth, El-yada in 2 Sam. ii. 8, iv. 4, v. 16. But the associations of the name were felt to be dangerous, as appears from the substitution of *bōsheth* 'shame' in the latter names; and the time arrived when Baal could no longer be used safely of the God of Israel, Hos. ii. 16 ff.

Ashtaroth] plur. of 'Ashtōreth, i.e. 'Ashtart (LXX. Ἀστάρτη) pronounced with the vowels of *bōsheth*—the goddess worshipped throughout

against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer
15 stand before their enemies. Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had spoken, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and
16 they were sore distressed. And the LORD raised up judges, which saved them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.
17 And yet they hearkened not unto their judges, for they went

the Semitic world, not only by the Phoenicians (1 Kings xi. 5, 33), but all over Palestine and on the E. of the Jordan, by the Philistines (1 Sam. xxxi. 10), by the Moabites (Moab. St. l. 17 Ashtar), in Bashan (Dt. i. 4) etc. In Babylonia and Assyria she was called Ishtar, in Syria 'Attar, in S. Arabia 'Athtar (a male deity); by the Greeks she was identified with Aphrodite. The meaning of the name is obscure; with regard to the form it will be noticed that the fem. ending in *t* is distinctively Canaanite. 'Ashtart was the goddess of fertility and generation. In the O.T. Baal and 'Ashtōreth together stand for the false gods and goddesses native to Palestine; and as Hebrew has no word for goddess, 'Ashtōreth is practically used instead. Here the combination of Baal (sing.) with 'Ashtārōth (plur., i.e. the many local forms of the goddess) is unusual, and we should probably read '*Ashtōreth*, the sing., in a collective sense.

14. *delivered them into the hands of spoilers*] So 2 Kings xvii. 20. The Dtc. compiler summarizes in general terms the various nations who were allowed to chastise Israel; there were *spoilers* (*v.* 16) such as the Midianites, *oppressors* (*v.* 18) such as the Philistines. *Spoilers*, Hebr. *shōsim*, is the same word as the Egyptian name, borrowed from Semitic, for the robber Bedouin of the desert, *shasu*; Müller, *Asien u. Europa*, p. 131.

sold them] One of the compiler's phrases, iii. 8, iv. 2 cf. 9, x. 7; cf. Dt. xxviii. 68, xxxii. 30, 1 Sam. xii. 9, Ezek. xxx. 12. Perhaps it was suggested by iv. 9, though its use in that older narrative is not quite the same as here.

their enemies round about] Cf. viii. 34; Dt. xii. 10, xxv. 19; 1 Sam. xii. 11. The enemies are those on the frontiers of Israel; contrast *v.* 21 (from E), where the enemies are the nations in the midst of Israel.

15. For the threat of punishment in case of disloyalty see Dt. xxviii. 48—53 and Lev. xxvi. 17, 36—39.

16. *raised up...saved*] Phrases of the compiler, cf. *v.* 18, iii. 9, 15, 31, x. 12, 13.

judges] not in the sense of magistrates, for there was no law or tribunal in our sense at a period when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." The "judges" were champions and leaders, called out to meet a special emergency, who vindicated Israel's rights in battle, iii. 10. The *suffetes* (Heb. *shōfĕtim*) of Carthage and the

a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves down unto them: they turned aside quickly out of the way wherein their fathers walked, obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not so. And when the LORD raised them up 18
judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and saved them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groaning by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. But it came 19
to pass, when the judge was dead, that they turned back, and dealt more corruptly than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; [1]they ceased not from their doings, nor from their stubborn

[1] Heb. *they let nothing fall of their doings.*

Carthaginian colonies bore the same title, but they held a regular magistracy, entirely different from the extraordinary office characteristic of this age; see *NSI.*, p. 115 f.

17. *they went a whoring after other gods*] As notoriously after the death of Gideon viii. 33 (cf. 27). This figurative expression occurs in the Pent., and especially in the prophets Hos. and Ezek., to denote forcibly Israel's unfaithfulness to Jehovah. As prostitution was a common feature of Semitic cults, the words may have been used originally in a literal sense, and afterwards metaphorically.

their fathers] i.e. Joshua and his contemporaries, *v.* 7.

This verse interrupts the connexion between *vv.* 16 and 18, and the phraseology and thought are not so distinctly Deuteronomic as the rest of the passage. The verse "seems to be the exclamation of a reader rather than the reflexion of a compiler" (Lagrange).

18. *was with the judge*] as He had been with Moses and Joshua, Josh. i. 5. The Hebrew tense here shews that the verbs *was, saved,* denote frequentative acts in the past, *used to be, used to save*; similarly, *it repented the LORD* means *the LORD used to be moved to pity.* Not that Jehovah abandoned His fixed intention to punish, but His compassion was roused by the people's cries to mitigate His purpose.

oppressed...vexed] The first word is used characteristically of Israel's oppressors, iv. 3, vi. 9, x. 12, 1 Sam. x. 18; cf. i. 34*n.* The second word occurs only here and Joel ii. 8; it is common in Aramaic, and may be a late gloss on *them that oppressed.* LXX. cod. A omits it.

19. *when the judge was dead...they turned back*] e.g. iv. 1, viii. 33; the whole period is a continual repetition of apostasy, subjugation, the cry for help, the deliverance—such is the Dtc. editor's reading of the history; see note at the beginning of this section. As in *v.* 18, the tenses denote repeated acts; *it used to come to pass, they used to turn back and deal corruptly.*

than their fathers] i.e. their predecessors in the age of the Judges, not the godly fathers of *vv.* 10, 17, 22.

20 way. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel;
and he said, Because this nation have transgressed my
covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not
21 hearkened unto my voice; I also will not henceforth drive
out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left
22 when he died: that by them I may prove Israel, whether
they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their

they ceased not from their doings] Joshua could say before he died that not one of Jehovah's good promises had failed of fulfilment (Josh. xxiii. 14 D); the compiler bitterly remarks that Jehovah's ungrateful people had **let** no kind of iniquity **fail** of performance. The same phraseology ('bad doings,' 'way') is used by Jeremiah, iv. 18, vii. 3, 5, xviii. 11.

20—22. These verses are clearly not the sequel of *vv.* 11—19; *v.* 20 continues *v.* 13 (see note); the opening words repeat *v.* 14; the nations in *v.* 21 are not on the frontiers, *round about* Israel (*v.* 14), but those left by Joshua in the midst of Israel; they are spared not only to punish Israel's sin, but to test its loyalty. The change of view indicates a different hand: *vv.* 20 and 21 seem to come from E; the source of *v.* 22 is not so evident, D (Moore, Nowack), half E and half D (Budde), a later gloss (Lagrange). The three verses have been worked over and expanded in the editorial process, but the main contents may be assigned to E. For *hearkened unto my voice* in E cf. Ex. xv. 26, xviii. 24.

transgressed my covenant which I commanded] Josh. vii. 11? RJE, xxiii. 16 D; cf. Josh. vii. 15, Dt. xvii. 2, 1 Kings xi. 11, Jer. xxxiv. 18. The covenant inaugurated at Sinai, renewed at Shechem (Josh. xxiv. 24, 25), imposed obligations upon Israel which practically amounted to commands; hence Jehovah could be said to "command His covenant," i.e. the obligations involved in the covenant. Thus in Dt. iv. 13 the covenant is identified with the Decalogue, in *ib.* v. 2, 3 it is followed by the Decalogue; cf. xxxiii. 9 (‖ thy promise), Ps. cxi. 9.

21. *I also will not...drive out*] By worshipping other gods Israel had broken the terms of the covenant, Ex. xxiii. 24 f., 32 f., xxxiv. 12—16; therefore Jehovah would not fulfil His promise to drive out the nations of Canaan, Ex. xxiii. 27 f., 31, xxxiv. 11, 24.

which Joshua left when he died] Josh. xxiii. 12 f.; *when he died* is not a translation, but a tacit correction of the original *and died*; LXX. *and he* (i.e. Jehovah) *left*, as in *v.* 23.

22. *prove Israel*] iii. 1, 4, as He had *proved* them in the wilderness, Ex. xvi. 4 J, xv. 25, xx. 20 E, Dt. viii. 2, 16, xiii. 3. The purpose of God's *proving* is to test man's loyalty and to perfect the character, Gen. xxii. 1; Ps. xxvi. 2; Jas. i. 2—4. In *vv.* 20, 21 the nations were not driven out because Israel must be punished, in *v.* 22 because Israel must be tested. The two ideas are not irreconcileable in thought; but it is probable that *v.* 22 was not written by the author of *vv.* 20, 21; at any rate the form of the sentence *whether they will keep...or not* is

fathers did keep it, or not. So the LORD left those nations, 23
without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them
into the hand of Joshua.

Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to prove 3
Israel by them, even as many as had not known all the wars
of Canaan; only that the generations of the children of 2
Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as

Deuteronomic; see the refs. to Deut. just given. In the Hebrew *way* must be corrected to *ways* to agree with *therein* (plur.).

23. Taking this verse as the conclusion of *vv.* 20—22, the emphasis falls on *hastily*, i.e. during Joshua's life-time; the nations were not destroyed all at once, because Jehovah wished to test the fidelity of the succeeding generations. But this adds little to the thought of *vv.* 20—22; and the last half of the verse takes us back to Joshua's life-time, whereas *vv.* 7, 8, 21 presuppose his death. The word *left* (not the word for *left* in *v.* 21) seems rather to connect with iii. 1, and most critics regard *v.* 23a as leading up to iii. 1—3, where the nations are left to teach Israel the art of war. If this is the case, *v.* 23a, like the nucleus of iii. 1—3, will belong to J, and form the close of ch. i.; **these** *nations* (not the nations in iii. 3) will then mean the nations alluded to in ch. i. The last part of the verse is a harmonizing gloss.

Ch. iii. Verses 1—3 explain why *Jehovah left* **these** *nations* (ii. 23); *it was merely to teach succeeding generations of Israelites the practice of war* (iii. 2 in the main).—The idea is obviously an ancient one, and belongs to the same historical stand-point as ch. i. This nucleus has been adapted (iii. 1) and commented on (*v.* 2 in part, *v.* 3) by later hands, which it is difficult to specify more exactly. The editorial process has left the text of *v.* 2 confused and overloaded.

these are the nations] i.e. those mentioned in *v.* 3. Instead of *the LORD left* the LXX. cod. A has *Joshua left*, as in ii. 21, but the verb here is different.

to prove Israel] goes back to the thought of ii. 22. The proof was necessary for the generations after Joshua who 'had not known' all the great work of Jehovah, ii. 7 note.

2. *might know*] The verb, instead of governing a direct object, is followed by a fresh clause *to teach them war*; the LXX. relieves the awkwardness by omitting *might know*, 'only for the sake of the generations...to teach them war.' The incompleteness of the conquest was not a punishment for Israel's unfaithfulness to the covenant (ii. 20, 21), nor a test of Israel's steadfastness (ii. 23, iii. 4—6), but a discipline[1] designed to train Israel to hold its own and ascribe its victories to Jehovah's help.

at the least such] **only** *such*; the repetition is clumsy; the rest of the verse looks like an explanatory gloss.

[1] Cf. Livy xxxix. 1. Is hostis (the Ligures) velut natus ad continendam inter magnorum intervalla bellorum Romanis militarem disciplinam erat.

3 beforetime knew nothing thereof; *namely*, the five lords of
the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Zidonians,
and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount
4 Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath. And they
were for to prove Israel by them, to know whether they
would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which

3. This verse should be compared with Josh. xiii. 2—6 D. The nations here are those occupying particular districts in W. Palestine; contrast *v.* 5, and the races mentioned in ch

the five lords of the Philistines] Probably one for each of the five cities named in 1 Sam. vi. 17, cf. Josh. xiii. 3. The word for 'lords' (*seren*, sing.) is only found in this connexion, cf. ch. xvi. ; it is evidently a native title.

and all the Canaanites] Hardly the entire population of W. Palestine, as in J (see i. 34 *n.*), but 'Canaanites' in the restricted sense found in E and D, viz. the inhabitants of the sea coast and Jordan valley, cf. Num. xiii. 29 E; Dt. i. 7, xi. 30; Josh. v. 1, xiii. 3 f. D; Zeph. ii. 5. Similarly in the Amarna tablets *Kinaḫḫi* (Canaan), and in some Egypt. inscr. *Ka-n-'-na* as a geographical term, appears to be limited to the northern 'lowland' or sea coast (*Ency. Bibl.* art. Canaan).

the Zidonians] is a general term for the Phoenicians, used in the O.T. (Dt. iii. 9; Josh. xiii. 4, 6; Jud. x. 12, xviii. 7 etc.), by the Assyrians, and the Greeks, and the Phoenicians themselves[1].

the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon] Elsewhere the Hivites inhabit the centre of Canaan, Gen. xxxiv. 2, Josh. ix. 7 etc.; the Lebanon district belonged to the kingdom of the Hittites (i. 26 *n.*), which extended from the far N.W. till it touched Canaan at this point. Hence for *Hivites* read *Hittites*, cf. Josh. xi. 3 LXX.

mount Baal-hermon] i.e. the mountain to which the town of Baal-hermon (1 Chr. v. 23) gave its name. But such a designation is contrary to usage; Josh. xiii. 5 D, in a passage closely resembling this, has 'Baal-gad under Mt Hermon,' which may be the correct reading here (Budde, Nowack); or we may simply follow LXX. cod. B 'mount H.'

the entering in of Hamath] frequently marks the N. boundary of Canaan or of Israel, Num. xiii. 21, xxxiv. 8; Josh. xiii. 5; 1 Kings viii. 65; 2 Kings xiv. 25 etc. The 'Entrance of H.' is the great valley between Lebanon and Hermon-Antilibanus, called Coele-Syria in classical times, and now 'The Valley' (El-Biḳa', cf. Josh. xi. 17); Moore, however, considers it to have been the plain of Ḥöms, 30 m. S. of Hamath. The city itself (now Ḥamā) lay on the Orontes, about 150 m. N. of Dan, but its territory stretched 50 m. to the S., as far as Riblah (2 Kings xxiii. 33). Hamath is mentioned in Egyptian monuments and the Amarna letters before the Israelite invasion, and in the inscrr. of the Assyrian kings (Schrader *COT.*[2] 323).

[1] See *NSI.*, pp. 54, 352.

he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses. And 5
the children of Israel dwelt among [1]the Canaanites; the
Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite,
and the Jebusite: and they took their daughters to be their 6
wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons, and
served their gods.

And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the 7
sight of the LORD, and forgat the LORD their God, and
served the Baalim and [2]the Asheroth. Therefore the anger 8

[1] Or, *the Canaanites, the Hittites &c.*
[2] See Ex. xxxiv. 13.

4. *to prove Israel*] leads back to the thought of ii. 22 and iii. 1, and prepares the way for *v.* 5. The verse seems to be a later editorial adaptation.

5. In contrast to *v.* 3 the nations here represent the *entire* population of W. Palestine. Such is the significance of this conventional list of the six (Ex. iii. 8+8 times) or the seven (with the Girgashites, Dt. vii. 1+2 times) races of Canaan, in JE and the Deut. writers. The connexion of *vv.* 5, 6 with the foregoing may be this: the nations were left to test Israel (ii. 20—22, iii. 1); but Israel, once settled among them (iii. 5), did not stand the test (iii. 6).

6. *they took their daughters*] Cf. Gen. xxxiv. 9, 16; Ex. xxxiv. 16; Dt. vii. 3. According to the ideas of the ancient world, it was impossible for the Israelites to maintain any religious exclusiveness when they intermarried with the heathen nations (cf. ii. 1 b—3); the connubium carried with it an alliance of religion and worship, as for instance in the case of Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 1 ff. The source of these two verses is disputed. If the connexion suggested above is correct, they may be assigned to E, though they shew no signs distinctive of that school.

7—11. *Othniel delivers Israel from Cushan-rishathaim.*

The account of this deliverance is given as a typical illustration of the theory announced in ii. 11—19. It is composed almost entirely of the standing formulae of the Deuteronomic editor. The other narratives of the Judges are founded upon some popular story, but there is no story here; the only details preserved are the bare names of the oppressor and the deliverer. As it stands this meagre notice can hardly be historical; but when we go behind it we seem to discover the faint tradition of an actual struggle.

7. *did that which was evil*] See ii. 11 *n.*; *forgat*, cf. Dt. vi. 12, viii. 11 etc.; 1 Sam. xii. 9; Hos. ii. 13; Jer. iii. 21.

the Baalim and the Asheroth] For *the Baalim* see ii. 13 *n.* The word rendered *groves* by AV. (from the LXX. ἄλσος, Vulg. lucus) is in Hebr. *ashēroth* (only here and 2 Chr. xix. 3, xxxiii. 3), usually *ashērim*,

of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them

plur. of *ashērah* which denotes a wooden pole planted (Dt. xvi. 21), or set up (2 Kings xvii. 10), beside an altar, and venerated as a sacred symbol. It was a characteristic feature of the Canaanite sanctuaries, and from them it was adopted by the Israelites; thus at Ophrah an *ashērah* stood by the altar of Baal (vi. 25), at Samaria, Beth-el, Jerusalem by the altar of Jehovah (2 K. xiii. 6, xxiii. 6, 15; cf. Dt. xvi. 21 f.). It seems to have been a general symbol for deity. How it came to have this significance is disputed; some regard the sacred pole as a substitute for a tree and a relic of primitive tree-worship; others think that the name meant originally a *sign-post*, marking the precincts of the sanctuary, cf. Assyr. *ashirtu* 'sanctuary,' 'temple.' Here, however, and in a few other passages, *ashērah*, like 'Ashtoreth elsewhere (e.g. ii. 13), is combined with Baal, and was *served* apparently as a divinity; cf. 2 K. xxiii. 4 and 1 K. xv. 13, 2 K. xxi. 7. Was *ashērah*, then, a goddess, confused with 'Ashtoreth and sometimes put in her place[1]? From outside the O.T. we find undoubted evidence of a goddess Ashērah, worshipped by the Babylonians in the remote period of Ḫammurabi (c. 2130 B.C.), and of Western or Canaanite origin; while the pr. name *Abd-ashirta* 'servant of Ashērah,' which occurs frequently in the Amarna letters, implies her cult in Canaan in the xv cent. B.C.[2] Still more decisive is the express mention of her name in the phrase 'the finger of Ashirat,' from one of the cuneiform tablets found at Taanach (Driver, *Schweich Lects.*, p. 82). The goddess Ashratum, i.e. 'the kindly,' 'the gracious,' is simply the fem. of the god Ashur, sometimes written Ashir. In S. Arabia we meet with *Athîrat*, the wife of the moon-god; in N. Arabia (Têma) the name was pronounced *Ashîra*[3]. The bearing of this evidence upon the usage of the O.T. is not easy to make out; there was a goddess Ashērah, though in the O.T. the name is probably not to be understood in this sense. At any rate the goddess never had a very distinct existence; in Babylonia she was overshadowed by Ishtar; in Canaan, at a later epoch, she was confused with, or absorbed into, the great Canaanite goddess 'Ashtoreth, and survived merely in the name of the sacred pole, usually a general symbol for deity, but occasionally, as here, regarded as itself divine and worshipped. In this way, perhaps, we may do justice to all the facts.

8. *sold them*] See ii. 14 *n.*

[1] The confusion goes much further in the Versions, e.g. Vulg. here has Astaroth; but it is in no way due to any similarity in the names, which are quite distinct.

[2] The inscr. of Ḫammurabi which mentions *Ash-ra-tum*, 'the bride of the king of heaven,' is given by Hommel, *Aufsätze u. Abhandlungen* ii. 211 f. In the Amarna letters the pr. name alluded to is once written *Ab-di-ash-ta-[ar]-ti*, i.e. 'servant of Ishtar,' shewing how early the confusion between Ashērah and 'Ashtoreth began; see also Zimmern, *Keilinschr. u. d. A. T.*[3] 432 ff.

[3] For *Athîrat* in Minaean inscrr see Hommel l.c. 206 ff., *Expos. Times* xi. (1899) 127; for the Aramaic inscr. of Têma see *NSI.* 195 ff. In the obscure expression ''Ashtart in the ashērah' the name occurs once in Phoenician, inscr. of Ma'sûb (*NSI.* 50). On some seals and gems, partly of Assyr.-Babyl., partly of Phoen. origin, an altar or a sacred tree is represented with what may be intended for a pole (or *maṣṣēbah* 'pillar') on either side.

into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim king of [1]Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. And when the children of Israel cried unto the 9
LORD, the LORD raised up a saviour to the children of Israel, who saved them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. And the spirit of the LORD came upon 10

[1] Heb. *Aram-naharaim.*

Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia] The rendering *Mesopotamia*, i.e. the vast region between the Euphrates and Tigris, comes from the LXX.; the Hebr. is *Aram-naharaim* 'Syria of the two rivers,' usually held to designate the country between the Euphrates and the Habor (2 Kings xvii. 6) or Chabōras, now Khābūr, because in the O.T. two towns are said to belong to it, Haran (Gen. xxiv. 10) and Pethor (Dt. xxiii. 5), the latter, however, situated on the western side of the Euphrates. But the form *naharaim* with the dual ending (*-aim*) may be due merely to the scribes who vocalized the Hebr. text; the original pronunciation was probably *Aram-nahārim* (plur.) 'Syria of Nahārim,' i.e. the rivers (cf. Riviera), which will then be the Hebr. equivalent of *Naharin* in Egyptian inscrr., *the land of Nahrima* or *Narima* in the Amarna tablets, the ancient name of the country which stretched from the Orontes across the Euphrates, and indefinitely eastwards. The subjugation of the Israelite tribes by the king of this remote region is as surprising as his overthrow by the small clan of Othniel in the S. of Judah. Yet a faint recollection of some actual event may be detected in the narrative, which is most improbable as it stands. The name Cushan-rishathaim ('Cushan of double wickedness,' a contemptuous sobriquet) suggests a connexion with Cushan, a Midianite tribe (Hab. iii. 7; cf. Num. xii. 1); nothing is more likely than that these Bedouin from Midian made an incursion into the S. of Judah, and were at last repulsed by the Kenizzites of Debir (i. 11 ff.). Perhaps the original tradition was perverted by the very natural confusion between Aram and Edom, which are barely distinguishable in the ancient writing (cf. 2 K. xvi. 6 RVm.); Aram once in the text, Naharaim would readily be added.

9. The verse is composed of the standing phrases of the Dtc. compiler: *cried unto the LORD v.* 15, iv. 3, vi. 6, 7, x. 10; *raised up... saved v.* 15, see ii. 16*n.*

Othniel] See i. 13*n.*

10. *the spirit of the LORD came upon him*] So the spirit *came* upon Jephthah xi. 29, and *clothed itself with* Gideon vi. 34, and *impelled* (xiii. 25) or *rushed upon* Samson xiv. 6, 19, xv. 14, and Saul 1 Sam. xi. 6. These heroes seemed to be possessed; their extraordinary feats of strength and daring struck the beholder as due to the presence of a superhuman power—the spirit of the Lord, i.e. Jehovah directly acting in the physical, as elsewhere in the intellectual and spiritual, sphere. In the O.T. the spirit is not realized as a distinct personality; the spirit of Jehovah is Jehovah Himself in operation, and, as the divine name implies, in redemptive operation on behalf of Israel.

him, and he judged Israel; and he went out to war, and the LORD delivered Cushan-rishathaim king of [1]Mesopotamia into his hand: and his hand prevailed against Cushan-
11 rishathaim. And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.
12 And the children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done
13 that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. And he

[1] Heb. *Aram.*

and he judged Israel] See on ii. 16. The verb means both 'to give judgement' and 'to do justice,' 'to give a person his rights'; in the latter sense it is used in parallelism with 'save,' and can even be followed by 'out of the hand of,' 1 Sam. xxiv. 15, 2 Sam. xviii. 19, 31. In the age before the monarchy the 'judges' or 'deliverers' exercised in Israel an intermittent function, to which they were specially summoned by Jehovah; hence the Dtc. compiler uses the word almost as the title of an office. When the national sense was more fully developed, the Israelites demanded a king to fulfil the same function permanently instead of intermittently: see 1 Sam. viii. 20.

11. *And the land had rest forty years*] A formula of the editor, to whom the chronological scheme of the Book is due; cf. *v.* 30, v. 31, viii. 28; and Josh. xi. 23, xiv. 15.

12—30. *Ehud delivers Israel from Moab.*

The story of Ehud is furnished by the editor with an introduction (*vv.* 12—15a) and conclusion (*v.* 30) in his usual manner. The narrative thus enclosed is one of the oldest in the Book; it has the freshness and vigour which belong to the best style of Hebrew story-telling. Traces of editorial interference may perhaps be detected here and there, *vv.* 19 and 20, 22 and 23, 27 and 28 are taken by some to be doublets; but the narrative as a whole (*vv.* 15b—29) is homogeneous. The Moabites, whose territory lay on the E. of the Dead Sea and reached northwards probably to the *fords of the Jordan*, had crossed the river, occupied Jericho, and reduced the Israelites of the neighbourhood. The Benjamites were the principal sufferers; and it was the Benjamite hero Ehud who, by a clever and courageous stratagem, freed his countrymen from the tyrant. By the Dtc. compiler the subjugation and deliverance are extended so as to affect all Israel.

12. *again did that which was evil*] The introduction to the story is made up of the familiar phrases of RD, see ii. 11—19; the special details are derived from the story itself. For *strengthened* cf. Ezek. xxx. 24.

Eglon the king of Moab] Elsewhere Eglon (=*calf*) is the name of a town in Judah, Josh. x. 3, 34; it survives in the mod. 'Ajlûn, i.e. the highlands between the Yabbok and the Yarmuk. But Eglah is a

gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek; and he went and smote Israel, and they possessed the city of palm trees. And the children of Israel served Eglon the 14
king of Moab eighteen years. But when the children of 15
Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised them up a saviour, Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a man left-handed: and the children of Israel sent a present by him unto

personal pr. name in 2 Sam. iii. 5. The land of Moab lay on the E. of the Dead Sea and stretched eastwards to the desert; on the S.W. it bordered on Edom; on the N.E. were the Ammonites, and on the N. Reuben and Gad. The northern frontier at this period probably extended beyond the N. end of the Dead Sea.

13. *Ammon and Amalek*] Moab and Ammon appear in alliance against Israel in 2 Chr. xx. 1; Ps. lxxxiii. 6f. includes Amalek also. The Amalekites were Bedouin of the deserts S. of Palestine, in the N. of the Sinaitic peninsula, cf. Num. xiii. 29 and ch. i. 16*n.*, vi. 3. The Dtc. editor generalizes the invasion ('and smote *Israel*'); perhaps he also enlarges the forces of the enemy.

the city of palm trees] i.e. Jericho, see i. 16. The district was once famous for its palms, balsam woods, and gardens (cf. the glowing description of Josephus, *War* iv. 8, 3); now 'a dozen isolated palms represent the splendid groves of the past,' Bliss in *DB.* ii. 581. At this period the possession of Jericho enabled Eglon to pursue his conquests W. of the Jordan; the city evidently commanded the district; later on it belonged to the kingdom of David, 2 Sam. x. 5. But according to Josh. vi. 24—26 JE Jericho was burnt to the ground and laid under a curse by Joshua, while 1 Kings xvi. 34 records the rebuilding of the city and the fulfilment of the curse in the time of Ahab. We must reconcile as best we can these conflicting statements.

15. *Ehud the son of Gera*] Both names occur in the Benjamite genealogies, Gen. xlvi. 21, 1 Chr. vii. 10, viii. 3, 5, 7; it has been suggested that both belonged to clans and not to individuals. Gera was certainly a clan, 2 Sam. xvi. 5 ('Shimei ben Gera'); but the Chronicler may have adopted (1 Chr. vii. 10) the name of Ehud merely from here, or the clan Ehud may have taken its name from the hero of this story. With the mention of Ehud the ancient narrative probably begins.

a man lefthanded] lit. *restricted as to his right hand*, the word only again in xx. 16. This peculiarity has a bearing upon what follows: being left-handed he naturally fastened his sword on the right side instead of the left, and thus was able to conceal a weapon without rousing suspicion.

a present] An euphemism for *tribute* (2 Sam. viii. 2, 6; 1 Kings iv. 21 etc.), which was paid in kind, and therefore had to be 'carried'.[1]

[1] The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser II (860—825 B.C.) in the Brit. Mus., Nimroud Central Saloon, No. 98, contains a sculptured relief of Israelites carrying tribute in the time of Jehu: an illustration of the obelisk is given in the Brit. Mus. *Guide to Bab. and Assyr. Antiquities*, Plate ii.

16 Eglon the king of Moab. And Ehud made him a sword which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he girded it
17 under his raiment upon his right thigh. And he offered the present unto Eglon king of Moab: now Eglon was a very fat
18 man. And when he had made an end of offering the present,
19 he sent away the people that bare the present. But he himself turned back from the [1]quarries that were by Gilgal, and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king. And he said, Keep silence. And all that stood by him went out from
20 him. And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting by himself alone in his [2]summer parlour. And Ehud said, I

[1] Or, *graven images* [2] Heb. *upper chamber of cooling.*

16. *a sword...of a cubit length*] The measure, a *gōmed*, does not occur again in the O.T.; Jewish interpreters explain it as a short cubit, i.e. the length from the elbow to the knuckles, about 13½ in. (Gk. πυγμή). This is the measure required; Ehud's weapon was a short two-edged sword, or long dagger, without a cross-piece (to judge from *v.* 22), such as could be buried, hilt and all, in the belly of the corpulent king.

17. *he offered the present*] The place is not mentioned; we are to think of some royal city in Moab, rather than of Jericho.

18. *he sent away*] From the foll. verse it seems that Ehud accompanied the carriers (cf. the same vb. in Gen. xviii. 16 'to bring them on the way') until they were at a safe distance, and then returned to the king's house alone. Judging from the analogy quoted in the footnote (p. 39) the carriers were Israelites.

19. *the quarries*] Everywhere else (e.g. Is. xxi. 9; Mic. v. 13 etc.), and in the margin of A. and RV. here, the word (*pesîlîm*) is rendered *graven images* (cf. *pesel* 'graven image'), and such is the meaning in this place; **idols**, or perhaps in a more general sense, **sculptured stones** (Moore). They were connected with the sanctuary of *Gilgal* (see on ii. 1), which was marked by a *circle* of sacred stones, traditionally those which Joshua set up to commemorate the crossing of the Jordan (Josh. iv. 20). The rendering *quarries* goes back to the Targum, and is due to the wish to avoid an objectionable reference. *The idols by Gilgal* may be mentioned merely as a familiar land-mark on the W. of the Jordan, cf. *v.* 26; or rather, perhaps, to account for what follows in *v.* 20. Ehud waited at the sanctuary to find a pretext for returning unexpectedly to speak with the king; he had received an oracle there, 'a message from God,' which he must communicate to the king personally (so Lagrange). The position of Gilgal, between Jericho and the Jordan, shews that Eglon's residence must have been not at Jericho, but on the other side of the river, in Moab.

Keep silence] Cf. Am. vi. 10. The command is addressed to the courtiers, who are dismissed in order that the king may speak to Ehud in private. Ehud had entered the presence publicly.

20 *And Ehud came unto him*] i.e. from the public hall to a private

have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat. And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the 21
sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly: and 22
the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, for he drew not the sword out of his belly; and [1]it came out behind. Then Ehud went forth into the porch, and 23
shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them. Now when he was gone out, his servants came; and they 24
saw, and, behold, the doors of the parlour were locked; and

[1] Or, *he went out into the ante-chamber.*

room: the king *was sitting in his cool roof-chamber*, such as is often built on the flat roof of an Eastern house. Ehud's words in *v.* 19, spoken publicly in the king's presence, contain a request for a private audience; the king thereupon dismisses his attendants, retires to his chamber on the roof, where he receives Ehud in the manner desired. The transition from *vv.* 19 to 20 is not clearly expressed: we should gather from *v.* 19 that, after the attendants had left, the interview took place in the public room; but in *v.* 20 Ehud finds the king alone in his *cool chamber*. There is no need, however, to regard the two verses as doublets; the narrative is compressed, and the omission of details leaves something to be supplied by the imagination.

a message from God unto thee] i.e. a divine communication. Josephus explains that it had been conveyed by a dream, *Ant.* v. 4, 2. The LXX. adds *O king*, which may be right. Out of respect for the oracle the king rises from his chair; cf. Num. xxiii. 18.

22. *and it came out behind*] i.e. the sword; but this is hardly grammatical, for *sword* is fem. and *came out* is mas. The marg. *he went out into the ante-chamber* is merely based upon a guess of the LXX. (τὴν προστάδα). The AV. renders *and the dirt came out*, so Vulg. statimque per secreta naturae alvi stercora proruperunt, Targ., Jews, and many moderns, correcting the unknown and corrupt Hebr. word *parshĕdon* to *peresh* = *dung*. "This somewhat drastic touch is altogether in the vein of the narrator" (Moore); cf. *vv.* 16, 17, 24b. On the other hand the clause is so much like the words at the beginning of the next verse in Hebr., that it may be a dittograph, a miswritten form of what follows.

23. *into the porch*] The rendering is a guess; the Hebr. word *misdĕron*, perhaps = 'a row' of pillars, must denote the part of the building to which Ehud went out when he left the 'upper chamber,' but the precise meaning is unknown; 'colonnade,' 'vestibule,' have been suggested.

upon him] i.e. Eglon; the *doors* are the two leaves of a double door, cf. xvi. 3, 1 Kings vi. 31 f. The form of the tense *and locked them* is incorrect; the words were probably added by a scribe to account for the locked doors in *vv.* 24, 25 (Moore, Budde).

24. *his servants came*] It is implied that Eglon's servants saw

they said, Surely he covereth his feet in his summer chamber.
25 And they tarried till they were ashamed: and, behold, he
opened not the doors of the parlour; therefore they took
the key, and opened *them*: and, behold, their lord was
26 fallen down dead on the earth. And Ehud escaped while
they tarried, and passed beyond the [1]quarries, and escaped
27 unto Seirah. And it came to pass, when he was come, that
he blew a trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim, and the
children of Israel went down with him from the hill country,

[1] Or, *graven images*

Ehud go out by the usual way, for they evidently believe their master to be alone, clause b; Moore.

he covereth his feet] An euphemism, cf. 1 Sam. xxiv. 3.

25. *till they were ashamed*] Cf. 2 Kings ii. 17, viii. 11; an idiom expressive of surprise and perplexity.

the key, and opened them] The lock or bolt was constructed most likely in the same fashion as the wooden locks still used in Palestine; the bolt is shot by hand, the key is used only for unlocking.

was fallen down dead] Cf. iv. 22; Judith xiv. 14 f.

26. *and passed beyond the quarries*] lit. *he having passed the sculptured stones*. The construction in Hebr. (a circumstantial clause dependent on the preceding) is harsh and awkward: it is accounted for if we may suppose that clause b ('and passed...unto Seirah') is a doublet of clause a. The repetition of *he escaped* looks as if this were the case. Instead of *passed the sculptured stones* we should probably translate *crossed* (i.e. the river Jordan, not mentioned but implied in the general situation) *near the sculptured stones*, cf. *v.* 19; for *crossed* without an expressed object cf. Gen. xxxii. 21 [22 Heb.], 2 Sam. xvii. 16; for the prep. *near* cf. *v.* 19 and iv. 11.

unto Seirah] *Se'îrah*, somewhere on the nearer highlands of Ephraim; otherwise unknown.

27. *when he was come*] If Se'îrah was meant, 'thither' should have been written. Some indication of the place is needed; the LXX. cod. B adds 'unto the land of Israel,' shewing that the obscurity was felt. Perhaps the simplest course is to suppose that the original order of words has been disturbed, and to read *when he was come to* (omit *in*) *the highlands of Ephraim he blew a trumpet*. For the summons to arms cf. vi. 34; 1 Sam. xiii. 3.

the hill country of E....the hill country] Cf. ii. 9, iv. 5, vii. 24, xvii. 1; Josh. xvii. 15. The Highlands, which extend continuously from the Great Plain to the S. of Judah, were occupied in the northern half by W. Manasseh, Ephraim, and Benjamin ('the hill country of E.'), in the southern half by Judah ('the hill country of J.' Josh. xxi. 11); at this period a line of Canaanite strongholds separated the territories of Joseph and Judah. The country between Ramah and Beth-el lay 'in the hill country of E.' iv. 5; it was the Israelites of this neighbourhood, i.e. the Benjamites, who responded to their clansman's call.

and he before them. And he said unto them, Follow after 28
me: for the LORD hath delivered your enemies the Moabites
into your hand. And they went down after him, and took
the fords of Jordan [1]against the Moabites, and suffered not
a man to pass over. And they smote of Moab at that time 29
about ten thousand men, every lusty man, and every man
of valour; and there escaped not a man. So Moab was 30
subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land
had rest fourscore years.

And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which smote 31

[1] Or, *toward Moab*

28. *Follow after me*] lit. *pursue after me*; the slight correction of the LXX. *come down after me*, cf. clause b, is generally accepted.

against the Moabites] Cf. vii. 24, xii. 5, i.e. so as to prevent the Moabites on the west side of the river (*v.* 13) from crossing to their own country. Of the three fords near Jericho, the southernmost near Gilgal is probably meant; cf. Josh. ii. 7, 2 Sam. xix. 15.

29. *ten thousand*] A round number, i. 4*n*. The Moabites who formed the army of occupation were all picked men.

30. *was subdued*] Similarly in the conclusions to the other stories, iv. 23, viii. 28, xi. 33; 1 Sam. vii. 13. The expression, which seems to form a more integral part of the narrative proper than the rest of the recurring phrases, "may mark the portions due to the pre-Deuteronomic compiler," Driver, *Introd.*[8], p. 167. The rest of the verse certainly belongs to the framework; cf. *v.* 11 note.

31. *Shamgar the son of Anath*] was unknown to the author of iv. 1, who passes at once from Ehud to Deborah. Shamgar is often reckoned as one of the minor Judges, but the account given of him is not modelled on the form of x. 1—5, xii. 8—15; no date is attached to the period of his activity, and he is not included in the chronology of the Book. It is clear that this brief notice was inserted after the Dtc. compiler had done his work. Further, an exploit against the Philistines in the period between Ehud and Deborah comes too early; the Philistines do not appear in history as enemies of Israel till the time of Saul (in the Samson story they are not yet the aggressors); the verse would be more in place after xvi. 31, and there in fact some MSS. of the LXX. actually insert it as well as here (so Aldine edn. of LXX., Syro-Hexaplar and Slav. Versions). Its present position is no doubt due to the mention of Shamgar ben Anāth in v. 6, which gives the impression that he was an oppressor, not a deliverer, of Israel in the days just before Deborah: he has no connexion with the Philistine country; the area of the oppression lies in the district of the northern tribes. This is all that we know of Shamgar[1].

[1] Nestle in *Journ. Th. St.* xiii. p. 424 f. shews that in some early Latin chronologies Shamgar was both placed after Samson, and regarded as an oppressor though also as a judge!

of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad: and he also saved Israel.

His name is foreign; cf. *Sangara*, a Hittite king of Carchemish in the time of Ashurnasipal and Shalmaneser II[1] (the *Samgar-nebo* of Jer. xxxix. 3 is probably a textual error); no Israelite could have been called 'son of (the goddess) Anāth,' who was worshipped in early times in Syria and Palestine, as appears from the old Canaanite place-names, Anathoth, Beth-anath etc.[2] It is curious that one of the allies of the Hittite king Sangara just mentioned bears the name *Bur-anati* (king of Jasbuki[3]). The exploit here recorded resembles that of Samson in xv. 14 f., and still more closely that of Shammah ben Agee, one of David's mighty men, at Lehi, 2 Sam. xxiii. 11 f. (which has been influenced by Samson's story); cf. also 2 Sam. xxi. 15—22. It is probable that the author of this verse derived his particulars in a general way from these sources, and attached them to the Shamgar of v. 6.

an ox goad] A pole from 6 to 8 feet long, with a pointed end of iron, the κέντρον of Acts xxvi. 14; it could be used readily as a spear.

Chs. **iv. and v.** *Deborah and Barak deliver Israel from the Canaanites.*

The account of the deliverance exists in two versions, one in prose (ch. iv.), the other in poetry (ch. v.). The two agree in the main: the chief actors are the same, Deborah, Barak, Sisera, Jael; the Canaanites are defeated with Jehovah's powerful aid in a battle near the Kishon; Sisera is murdered by Jael in her tent. But there are some striking disagreements: in ch. iv. the oppressor is Jabin king of Hazor, and Sisera of Harosheth is his general; Deborah is connected with Ephraim, Barak with Kedesh; two tribes only, Zebulun and Naphtali, take part in the battle; Jael murders Sisera while he lies asleep by driving a tent-peg through his temples. On the other hand, ch. v. knows nothing of Jabin, Sisera is the head of a confederacy of Canaanite kings (*v.* 19), and is in fact a king, his mother has princesses for attendants (*v.* 29); apparently both Deborah and Barak belong to Issachar (*v.* 15); the struggle is on a much larger scale, all the tribes are summoned to arms, and for the first time Israel acts almost as a nation (*vv.* 13—18); Jael fells Sisera with a mallet while he is standing and drinking (*v.* 26 f.). Comparing the two versions there can be no doubt as to which we are to follow; the Song is obviously ancient, and may well be contemporary with the events it describes; it is not only one of the finest odes in the Hebrew language, but it possesses the highest value as a historical document. Moreover the prose narrative is not consistent with itself. How is it that Jabin has no share in the battle, and allows Barak to muster his forces at Kedesh, within a few miles of Hazor, and pass

[1] *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek* i. p. 139.
[2] See further *NSI.*, p. 80 f.
[3] *KB.* i. 159. This has been pointed out by Ball in Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*[2], s.v. Ishbak.

And the children of Israel again did that which was evil **4**
in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead. And the 2
LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan,

unmolested almost under its walls? Why did Sisera take refuge with Jael rather than with Jabin whose city was close at hand? It is evident that Jabin is out of place in this narrative; he must have been introduced into it from Josh. xi. 1—15 JE, underlying which is probably an ancient tradition of a struggle between Jabin king of Hazor and the two tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, assembled at Kedesh for the fight, in the early days of the Israelite invasion. How this Jabin-tradition came to be mixed up with the story of Sisera we cannot exactly tell; perhaps it was because both were concerned with fighting in northern Palestine, and with fighting against Canaanites; the two were then superficially harmonized by reducing Sisera to the position of general of Jabin's army. It is noteworthy that the combination was effected before Ps. lxxxiii. 9 and 1 Sam. xii. 9 (D) were written, and before the Dtc. compiler of Judges provided ch. iv. with his introduction and conclusion. The narrative of the battle between Sisera and the tribes of Israel, which remains when the Jabin-tradition is withdrawn, seems to have preserved an independent tradition where it differs from ch. v.: e.g. in the account of Sisera's death, and of the negotiations between Deborah and Barak; while the addition of such names as Tabor, Harosheth, which harmonize with the general situation implied in ch. v., is perfectly natural in a prose version. The hand of the Dtc. compiler reveals itself in iv. 1—3, 23, 24, v. 31b.

1. *again did that which was evil*] The compiler's formula; see ii. 11, 14*n*.

when Ehud was dead] According to RD the Israelites remained faithful so long as the judge was alive to keep them in check. The verse is a continuation of iii. 30, Shamgar (iii. 31) being passed over.

2. *Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor*] Hazor, already a royal city in the xv cent. B.C. (Amarna Tablets 154, 41), lay in the neighbourhood of Kedesh-naphtali (Josh. xix. 36 f., 2 Kings xv. 29) and to the S. of it (1 Macc. xi. 63, 67 ff.); the name (=*enclosure*) is preserved in Jebel Ḥadīreh (=*sheep-fold*) and Merj el-Ḥadīreh, W. of the lake of Ḥūleh, but the site is not known with certainty; Guthe (*Bibel Atlas*) places it at Ḥurēbeh, 2 m. E. of Jebel Ḥadīreh; in any case Jabin's city was at least 30 m. N. of the scene of Barak's victory. The compiler here and in *vv.* 23, 24 raises *Jabin king of Hazor* (*v.* 17, Josh. xi. 1) to the rank of *king of Canaan* (cf. Gen. xxvi. 1, 8 'king of the Philistines'), an anomalous title, for Canaan was not an organized kingdom under a single head, but a general name for a region of independent towns each with a chief of its own (Josh. v. 1, ix. 1, xi. 1 etc.). The tradition is further magnified in Josh. xi. 1—15, where the struggle between Jabin king of Hazor and the two tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, a reminiscence of which probably underlies the present narrative and Josh. xi., becomes the conquest of N. Canaan by Joshua and all Israel.

that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera,
3 which dwelt in Harosheth of the [1]Gentiles. And the children
of Israel cried unto the LORD: for he had nine hundred
chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the
children of Israel.
4 Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, she
5 judged Israel at that time. And she [2]dwelt under the palm
tree of Deborah between Ramah and Beth-el in the hill
country of Ephraim: and the children of Israel came up to

[1] Or, *nations* [2] Or, *sat*

the captain of whose host was Sisera] Cf. *v.* 7. By subordinating Sisera in this way an attempt was made to combine the two traditions. But the narrative as it proceeds makes it clear that Sisera was an independent chief; the *nine hundred chariots of iron* (see i. 19*n.*) in *v.* 13 belong to him; like Jabin, he had his own capital, Harosheth, probably Ḥārīthīyeh, on the right bank of the Kishon, at the S.W. corner of the Plain of Jezreel, where the chariots could be used with effect. The name Sisera, which occurs again in Ezra ii. 53, is foreign, cf. the Assyr. *sasur* 'progeny,' *seseru* 'child': it may not be Semitic at all; Moore compares the Hittite names ending in *-sira*, Ḥtasira, Maurasira (W. H. Müller, *As. u. Eur.*, p. 332).

4. *Deborah, a prophetess*] i.e. a woman inspired to declare the divine will, and on this occasion to deliver her country from oppression; as a prophetess she announces the command of Jehovah (*v.* 6) and the moment for action (*v.* 14). We are reminded of Joan of Arc; Moore also compares the German Veleda, who instigated Civilis by her prophecies to throw off the Roman yoke, Tacitus *Hist.* iv. 61. Other prophetesses in the O.T. are Miriam (Ex. xv. 20), Huldah (2 Kings xxii. 14), Noadiah (Neh. vi. 14). Debōrah = 'bee,' Lappīdoth = 'torches.'

she judged Israel] i.e. in the sense of ii. 16, iii. 10 (see notes), 'delivered Israel,' though in the Hebr. the verb is vocalized as a ptcp. *she was judging*, perhaps on account of the following *at that time*; it can hardly mean that Deborah exercised authority as 'judge' before the deliverance, for everywhere else it is the deliverance which establishes the judgeship, according to the Dtc. compiler. The next verse, however, interprets *she was judging* in the legal sense, and therefore adds that during the period of the oppression the Israelites *came up to her for judgement*; it would appear that *v.* 5 is an explanatory insertion.

5. *dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah*] The marg. **sat** is better, cf. vi. 11, 1 Sam. xiv. 2, xxii. 6, lit. *she was sitting*, i.e. to declare the divine will in disputes and cases of difficulty; hence, it is implied, *the palm tree of Deborah* between Ramah (er-Rām) and Beth-el (Beitin), 5 and 12 m. respectively N. of Jerusalem, obtained its name. In the same neighbourhood, and associated with the same name, was the famous tree called *Allon-bacuth*, 'tree (? oak) of mourning,' under which

her for judgement. And she sent and called Barak the son 6
of Abinoam out of Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him,
Hath not the LORD, the God of Israel, commanded, *saying*,
Go and draw unto mount Tabor, and take with thee ten
thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children

Deborah the nurse of Rachel was buried, Gen. xxxv. 8. The conclusion seems to be irresistible that we have here and in Gen. xxxv. 8 two different ways of accounting for the name of the same tree. Of the two, that given in Gen. is perhaps preferable; for there is nothing elsewhere in the present narrative to suggest that Deborah's home was in the S. of the hill country of Ephraim; v. 15, though it does not speak distinctly, appears to connect her with Issachar; and it is more likely that the deliverer arose where the need was the sorest, rather than from a district outside the area of the oppression. Moreover, Deborah with her head-quarters near Beth-el would have been too far apart from Barak for the conduct of the negotiations in *vv.* 6—9.

6. *And she sent and called Barak*] continues *v.* 4. Barak = 'lightning'; the name is found in Phoenician, e.g. Barcas the father of Hannibal, and in Palmyrene and Sabaean (*NSI.*, p. 299).

out of Kedesh-naphtali] also called K. in Galilee (Josh. xx. 7) to distinguish it from other places of the same name; it is mentioned in the Amarna letters and in Egypt. documents; the modern Ḳades 4 m. N.W. of the lake of Ḥûleh represents the ancient site. But the presence of Kedesh in this chapter raises serious difficulties; the town was too near Hazor, and too far from the scene of the conflict with Sisera, for the muster of Barak's troops. Probably, therefore, Kedesh is an element in the Jabin-tradition, though how much of the present narrative belongs to that tradition cannot be exactly determined.

mount Tabor] Now Jebel eṭ-Ṭûr, 1843 ft., a prominent feature in the landscape of S.E. Galilee, remarkable for its dome-like shape and apparent isolation. It was the natural rallying-place for Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali, whose settlements were in the neighbourhood (cf. Josh. xix. 12, 22, 34, which, however, describes the boundaries of a later age); while the position of the mountain, commanding the N.E. quarter of the Great Plain and one of the main outlets to the Jordan, afforded obvious advantages for a descent upon an enemy advancing from the W. across the Plain. A further reason for Barak's muster on Tabor has been suggested; apparently Issachar and Zebulun had a religious centre there, Deut. xxxiii. 19 (*the mountain* is prob. Tabor); the holy war would begin with a sacrifice at the tribal sanctuary (cf. 1 Sam. xiii. 9—12). This is possible.

Naphtali...Zebulun] The restriction of the combatants to these two tribes seems to agree better with the Jabin- than with the Sisera-story; in ch. v. not two, but six tribes take part in the battle.

7. The overthrow of the enemy is predicted with prophetic authority; cf. Ex. xiv. 4.

7 of Zebulun? And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon
Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and
8 his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand. And
Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go:
9 but if thou wilt not go with me, I will not go. And she
said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey
that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD
shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah
10 arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh. And Barak called
Zebulun and Naphtali together to Kedesh; and there went
up ten thousand men at his feet: and Deborah went up
11 with him. Now Heber the Kenite had severed himself from
the [1]Kenites, even from the children of Hobab the [2]brother

[1] Heb. *Kain*. See Num. xxiv. 22. [2] Or, *father in law*

the river Kishon] *v.* 13, v. 21, now called Nahr el-Muḳaṭṭa', rises from the hills near Jenin (En-gannim), and flows "in a muddy trench, unseen five yards away" (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geogr.*, p. 382), parallel to the Carmel range, draining the Great Plain, and empties itself into the sea near Ḥaifa. A northern branch rises to the W. of Tabor.

the captain of Jabin's army] See on *v.* 1.

8. *If thou wilt go with me*] By having the prophetess with him, Barak could count upon divine guidance, cf. *v.* 14. The LXX. cod. B and Luc. brings this out by adding 'for I know not the day whereon the angel of the Lord may prosper me,' which looks like the rendering of a Hebr. sentence, but is of questionable originality, and may be based on v. 23.

9. *notwithstanding*] Lest Barak's hopes should soar too high, the prophetess foretells that the crowning glory shall not be his but Jael's. It is doubtful whether any blame of Barak is implied: the words mean simply 'thou wilt not gain the honours of the expedition.'

And Deborah arose...to Kedesh] From the neighbourhood of Beth-el the journey would take four or five days. But we have seen reason to doubt the existence of Deborah's home in the S.; these words are perhaps a harmonizing addition; see notes on 5 and 6a.

10. See notes on *v.* 6.

and Deborah went up with him] i.e. to mount Tabor, *v.* 12; the clause seems to belong to the story of Sisera. *at his feet* means *following him*, cf. viii. 5, 1 Sam. xxv. 27, 1 Kings xx. 10.

11. *Now Heber the Kenite*] The verse explains, with a view to *v.* 17 ff., how the Kenites, who belonged properly to southern Palestine (see on i. 16), came to be in this region: the family of Heber had *branched off* (cf. Gen. x. 5, 32) from the main clan, and pitched their tents as far north as the Tree of Bezaanim (so read, as below), near Kedesh. The words *even from the children of Hobab...Moses* are a gloss on *from Kain*, probably derived from i. 16 in its original form. It is impossible to

in law of Moses, and had pitched his tent as far as the [1]oak
in [2]Zaanannim, which is by Kedesh. And they told Sisera 12
that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to mount Tabor.
And Sisera gathered together all his chariots, even nine 13
hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that were with
him, from Harosheth of the [3]Gentiles, unto the river Kishon.
And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this is the day in 14
which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: is

[1] Or, *terebinth* [2] See Josh. xix. 33.
[3] Or, *nations*

reconcile the geographical data in the narrative as it stands. Heber's encampment is here said to be *near Kedesh*, which must be Kedesh-naphtali, judging from *v.* 17b, where Heber is brought into relation with Jabin king of *Hazor*. But *v.* 18 ff. require a position for the Kenite tents in quite a different quarter, near the battle-field by the Kishon, on the route of Sisera's flight. Kedesh and Hazor are elements in the story of Jabin (see *v.* 6*n.*); while Jael, and from her we can hardly separate Heber, belongs to the story of Sisera; yet in *v.* 17b Heber is connected with Jabin. The difficulty may be relieved by supposing that the writer who combined the two stories, the writer responsible for making Sisera the general of Jabin's army *v.* 7, has here confused Kedesh in Naphtali with *another place* of the same name, and thus brought Heber into connexion with Jabin, though originally they had nothing to do with each other. Two alternatives as to the position of another Kedesh may be considered. (1) In 1 Chr. vi. 72a Kedesh in Issachar is mentioned (but Josh. xix. 20, xxi. 28 give Kishion), perhaps Tell Abū Ḳudēs between Megiddo and Taanach; this would suit *vv.* 11, 17a, 18 ff. Near this must be placed the Tree of Bezaanim, doubtless a sacred tree, not necessarily an *oak*. The name occurs again in Josh. xix. 33 (see RVm.), but not in such a way as to determine its situation; it is mentioned as lying on the boundary of Naphtali, and this raises a difficulty—it could not be described as 'near Kedesh' *in Issachar* (? Abū-Ḳudēs). (2) Bezaanim (so read for *in Zaanannim*), Βεσεμιελν Josh. xix. 33 LXX. B, is identified by Conder (*Tent Work*, p. 68 ff.), followed by G. A. Smith (*Hist. Geogr.*, p. 395f.), with Khirbet Bessūm on the plateau W. of the lake of Tiberias; to the W. there lies a Kedesh, 12 m. from Tabor, on the lake; not far off is Dāmiyeh, perhaps the Adāmi of Josh. xix. 33. We thus obtain the required conditions; but the identifications are very uncertain, and if we accept them we must give up the identification of Harosheth with Ḥārithīyeh, which would then lie too far from the battle-field. There are difficulties in both explanations, fewest perhaps in (1).

13. *Harosheth of the Gentiles*] See on *v.* 2; *of the Gentiles* (*goyim*) perhaps on account of the non-Jewish population in the district, cf. *Gĕlīl hag-goyim*, 'the Circle' or 'District of the Gentiles' in N. Palestine, Is. ix. 1.

not the LORD gone out before thee? So Barak went down
15 from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. And
the LORD discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his
host, with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera
lighted down from his chariot, and fled away on his feet.
16 But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto
Harosheth of the [1]Gentiles: and all the host of Sisera fell by
the edge of the sword; there was not a man left.
17 Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael
the wife of Heber the Kenite: for there was peace between
Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

[1] Or, *nations*

14. *is not the LORD gone out before thee?*] i.e. to battle. Jehovah was believed to 'come forth' from His place on Sinai to fight for Israel (v. 4 f.), or to march against Israel's enemies with the ark as His symbol (Num. x. 35), or to be Israel's leader in battle (2 Sam. v. 24; cf. Hab. iii. 13; Zech. xiv. 3; Ps. xliv. 9). The belief in Jehovah as 'a man of war' was characteristic of this period, Ex. xv. 3; cf. Ps. xxiv. 8

went down from mount Tabor] The sudden rush down the hill threw Sisera's forces into confusion and rendered his chariots useless. The Jews of a later day (A.D. 67) attempted by the same means to overwhelm the Roman cavalry dispatched by Vespasian, but without success; Jos., *War* iv. 1, 8. In the Song, the river Kishon plays a part in the tragedy not mentioned in the tradition as given here.

15. *discomfited*] lit. 'confused,' 'threw into a panic.' The word, not a common one, occurs again in the prose counterpart to the Song of Moses (Ex. xiv. 24), and in Josh. x. 10 just before the poetic fragment *vv.* 12, 13; cf. 1 Sam. vii. 10. The words *with the edge of the sword* do not go well with *threw into a panic*; they may have come accidentally from *v.* 16.

16. The Canaanites fled in a westerly direction to their base, pursued by Barak, and not one escaped; cf. Ex. xiv. 28.

17. Clause a taken with *v.* 22 implies that Sisera, as he fled from the battle, found a place of refuge close by; but according to clause b taken with *v.* 11 Jael's tent was in the north, near Kedesh-naphtali, 40 or 50 miles from the Kishon valley. The inconsistencies of the narrative can only be explained by supposing that the two stories of Jabin and Sisera have been combined by a sentence designed to harmonize them, 17 b. Jael certainly belongs to the story of Sisera; it has been suggested that Heber belongs to that of Jabin. But we cannot separate Jael from Heber; it would be irregular to name a prominent Bedouin woman, living in an encampment with her family, without mentioning her husband. Probably we must separate Heber from Jabin, and suppose that the connexion between them is merely editorial; see above on *v.* 11. The composite character of *v.* 17 is responsible for

And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn 18
in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not. And he turned in unto
her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. And he 19
said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink;
for I am thirsty. And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave
him drink, and covered him. And he said unto her, Stand 20
in the door of the tent, and it shall be, when any man doth
come and inquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here?
that thou shalt say, No. Then Jael Heber's wife took a tent- 21
pin, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto
him, and smote the pin into his temples, and it pierced
through into the ground; for he was [1]in a deep sleep; so he

[1] Or, *in a deep sleep and weary; so he died*

another difficulty. In *v.* 17 Sisera aims for Jael's tent because of the friendly relations between Heber and Jabin; but in *v.* 18 he comes upon it while he is flying, and is persuaded by Jael to *turn aside*. By inserting after *fled away on his feet* a verb *and came* we gain some relief, but it is better to regard clause b as not belonging to the original form of the narrative. '*Jael's* tent' is mentioned because as the wife of a Bedouin chief she would have a tent of her own.

18. *Turn in*] **turn aside**, cf. xix. 12; Gen. xix. 2, 3 etc.

rug] Only here. The exact meaning is unknown; no help is afforded by the versions.

19. *a bottle of milk*] **the milk-skin**, the goat-skin in which the Bedouin still keep water, milk etc.; cf. Josh. ix. 4 (used for wine). From v. 25 we gather that Jael poured the milk into a bowl. Her hospitality gave Sisera a feeling of security. Note the contrast with v. 25—27; here Sisera asks for drink, and Jael brings it after he has lain down and been covered with the tent-rug.

21. *a tent-pin*] a wooden peg, used for fastening the ropes, and driven in with **the mallet**, both of them instruments which Bedouin women are accustomed to use.

and it pierced through] **and it descended**; the verb only again in i. 14, Josh. xv. 18, where it means *alight, descend from*.

for he was in a deep sleep; so he swooned and died] The word for *swooned* is uncertain. With a slight change, but following the Hebr. accents, AV. reads 'for he was in a deep sleep *and weary*; *so he died*.' This makes smoother grammar. In v. 26, 27 Jael murders Sisera while he is standing and drinking out of the bowl. Some have explained the different account given here as due to a misunderstanding of the parallelism of v. 26, as though *peg* and *hammer* meant two different implements, seized, the one by *her hand*, the other by her *right hand*. But it is more probable that the whole account of Jael's action in ch. iv. is founded on a slightly different tradition, which made Jael murder Sisera in his sleep.

22 swooned and died. And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera,
Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come, and
I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest. And he
came unto her; and, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the tent-
23 pin was in his temples. So God subdued on that day Jabin
24 the king of Canaan before the children of Israel. And the
hand of the children of Israel prevailed more and more
against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed
Jabin king of Canaan.

22. *And, behold, as Barak pursued*] hardly does justice to the original, 'lo Barak, in pursuit of Sisera'; a remarkable coincidence! cf. xi. 34, Gen. xxix. 6. According to *v.* 16 Barak with his tribesmen pursued the Canaanites to Harosheth; Sisera's hiding-place must have lain more or less on the route. On the difficulties of the narrative as it stands see above *v.* 17 *n.*

23, 24 give RD's conclusion of the story; v. 31b is the finishing touch.

God subdued] Instead of God (Elohim) the narrative uses regularly *the* LORD (Jehovah). For *subdued* see on iii. 30. It is generally supposed that the stories of the Judges were closed with a brief notice of the subjugation of the oppressors, *before* the Dtc. redactor expanded these conclusions in his own manner; perhaps the words *Elohim subdued*...formed part of this pre-Deuteronomic editorial work.

Jabin the king of Canaan] See on *v.* 2.

prevailed more and more against] **bore harder and harder upon**, cf. iii. 10.

Ch. v. *The Song of Deborah.*

There can be little doubt that this splendid Ode belongs to the same date as the events which it describes. The passions roused by the battle have not cooled down; the sense of a common danger, the enthusiasm of united action, the exultation in Jehovah's triumphant aid, are felt with a vividness which only a contemporary could have put into words. The religious temper and the political situation agree with what we know of the period of the Judges from elsewhere, while the antique poetic language may well be characteristic of the same date. The Ode, then, is a most ancient composition, earlier probably than anything else in the Old Testament of the same extent; its original place may have been in some collection of old Hebrew songs such as the Book of Jashar (Josh. x. 13; 2 Sam. i. 18) or the Book of the Wars of Jehovah (Num. xxi. 14). A text so ancient must inevitably have suffered in the course of ages; and though the general sense is clear, in many places we cannot follow the connexion of thought or interpret particular words. This is due partly to our ignorance of the ancient language, and even more to the

exceedingly corrupt state of the text; in *vv.* 8—15 especially the corruption is so deep-seated that it looks as if some accident had happened to the MS. from which our present text is descended. Prof. Moore suggests that at this point the page was obliterated or rubbed, so that the early copyist was driven to make what sense he could out of it. The process of corruption must have begun before the Greek Versions were made, for on the whole they presuppose much the same text as we have.

The Song is an invaluable witness to the history of the period. After a spell of oppression (*v.* 7), probably brought on by the expansion of the Israelite tribes in the direction of the Great Plain, the Canaanites, led by Sisera at the head of the local chiefs, made a determined effort to drive the Israelites back into their hills. To resist this formidable movement, and to put an end to an intolerable state of insecurity and humiliation, Deborah roused the tribes. Six of them, those immediately N. and S. of the Plain, responded to the summons; the remoter clans, Dan and Asher in the N., Reuben and Gilead (Gad) on the E. of Jordan, refused to stir themselves. Judah is not mentioned: it was cut off from Ephraim and the rest by a line of Canaanite strongholds (see p. xxx); Simeon and Levi, who are also passed over, seem to have been unable to maintain a distinct existence after the early stages of the invasion. The battle was fought near Taanach and Megiddo (*v.* 19), down the valley of the Kishon, whose waters, swollen by a tremendous storm (*v.* 20 f.), worked havoc among the Canaanite forces.

That a summons to battle could be sent round and meet with a response shews that the tribes admitted the claim of a common bond of race. At an earlier period some of them, at any rate, had wandered together in the desert, and camped together on the outskirts of Canaan (p. xxviii f.). Israel had not yet grown into a nation, but when the tribes made common cause against Sisera, under the impulse of Deborah's high enthusiasm, they took the first step in the development of united national action. Stronger, however, than the bond of race was the influence of a common faith. The Song bears unmistakable witness to the fervour and reality of Israel's religion at this early period. Jehovah is the God of Israel; He is no Canaanite deity, His seat is in the southern desert (Sinai, Horeb) whence He travels in tempest to His people's aid (*vv.* 4, 5); His presence and power are on the side of Israel (*v.* 11); He fights in Israel's battles (*v.* 23), and Israel's enemies are His (*v.* 31). This faith, which gave to Israel a distinctive character among other races, confirms indirectly the tradition which connects the acceptance of Jehovah as the national God with Sinai and the work of Moses; herein lay the secret of Israel's national progress during the ages of slow consolidation which followed.

The Song falls naturally into three divisions: A. *vv.* 2—11 an introduction, B. *vv.* 12—22 a description of the battle, C. *vv.* 23—31 the sequel. Within these divisions some kind of strophical arrangement,

i.e. a grouping of verses connected in thought, can be detected, thus:

A.

vv. 2—3. Exordium.
4—5. Jehovah's advent.
6—8. The recent oppression.
9—11. ?? The celebration of Jehovah's acts.

B.

12. Prelude.
13—15 a. The muster.
15 b—18. The reluctant and the ready.
19—22. The battle.

C.

23. The cursing of Meroz.
24—27. The courage of Jael.
28—30. The mother of Sisera.
31 a. Conclusion.

To obtain a more complete symmetry, with a regular number of verse-lines in each strophe, the text must be considerably altered; and as the emendations are necessarily conjectural, none of the attempts to restore a perfectly consistent scheme of strophes and verse-lines can claim any certainty. Much ingenious labour has been spent upon the metre of the Song; but while we can hardly deny the existence of a metrical system in Hebrew, in this case the text is too insecure to establish any satisfactory results. All that can safely be said is that the prevailing rhythm contains four, or sometimes three, beats in each verse-line, e.g. *v.* 28·

Oút of the window loóked and críed
The móther of Sísera oút of the láttice:
Why do his cháriots tárry in cóming,
Why línger the stéps of his teáms?

An imposing effect is produced by the frequent use of the kind of parallelism known as the climactic or progressive; (1) the first line is incomplete, and the second line repeats some words of it and completes them, e.g. *vv.* 4 b (? text), 7, 12 b, 19 a (? text), 23 b, cf. Ps. xxix. 1, xcii. 9 a, xciii. 3, xciv. 3 etc.; (2) the first line is complete, and the second line repeats some words of it with an addition, e.g. *vv.* 3 b, 5, 11 b, 21, 24, cf. Ps. xxii. 4, xxix. 5, 8, lxvii. 3, lxxvii. 16. This kind of parallelism is not common, and belongs only to elevated poetry.

1. The title says that the Ode was sung by Deborah and Barak, no doubt on account of the 1st person in *vv.* 3, 9, 13, and the verb rendered *I arose* in *v.* 7. But in *v.* 12 Deborah herself is addressed by name (cf. *v.* 15), and in *v.* 7 the verb can just as correctly be rendered *thou didst arise*; while the 1st person in *vv.* 3, 9, 13 is readily explained by the love of personification so common in the O.T. (see on i. 3): the poet acts as the mouthpiece of his victorious countrymen. The title represents a traditional view of the Song, but it does not carry more weight than the title of the Song of Moses Ex. xv., or the headings of the Psalms.

Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on 5
that day, saying,

For that the leaders took the lead in Israel, 2
For that the people offered themselves willingly,
Bless ye the LORD.
Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes;
I, *even* I, will sing unto the LORD;
I will sing praise to the LORD, the God of Israel.

2, 3. Exordium.

2. The translation, after the LXX. cod. A, gives a good parallelism (leaders and people as in *v.* 9), but it rests on slender support. The noun rendered *leaders* has this meaning among others (such as *abundant hair*, in Arabic), but in Hebrew the verb 'took the lead' properly means *to loosen* Ex. v. 4, especially *to let the hair go loose* Lev. x. 6, xiii. 45, and the noun is used of the long *locks* of the Nazirites Num. vi. 5. Wearing the hair long was the mark of a vow not to do certain things until a specified object had been attained; the practice was observed not only by the Nazirites but by warriors bent upon vengeance; for an illustration from Arabic see Wellhausen, *Reste Arab. Heidenthums*[2], p. 123*n.*, and cf. Ps. lxviii. 21. Hence we may transl. **when the locks grew long in Israel** i.e. when the warriors took the vow of vengeance: this may be the meaning of the same word in Dt. xxxii. 42 'from the long-haired heads of the foe.' *Offered themselves willingly*, of volunteering for battle, only again in 2 Chr. xvii. 16, cf. Ps. cx. 3; usually of offerings to the Temple in Chr., Ezr., Neh. The translation *For that...For that...Bless ye* is contrary to usage, which rather requires *When...When*, as in *v.* 4 where the same construction occurs; but this does not agree with *Bless ye*. The exact sense of the verse is doubtful.

3. The great ones of the earth are called upon to attend the praises of the victorious God of Israel. *Hear...give ear* a frequent parallelism, e.g. Gen. iv. 23; *kings...princes* again in Hab. i. 10; Ps. ii. 2; Pr. viii. 15, xxxi. 4. The word for *princes* thus occurs chiefly in the later literature, but it may have belonged to the elevated style in ancient poetry. **I, unto Yahweh I will sing**; there is a ring about the words in the original, and a strong emphasis on the pronoun. **I will make melody**, with voice and instruments, a word specially frequent in the Psalter.

4, 5. Jehovah's advent. These verses describe the awful coming of Jehovah to help His people in the battle: the Godhead approaches in storm and thunder, in the very storm which brought disaster upon Sisera's army, *v.* 20f. Similar accompaniments of Jehovah's presence are alluded to in Mic. i. 3, 4; Is. lxiv. 1; Ps. xviii. 7—15, l. 3, xcvii. 2—6. The ancient dwelling-place of Jehovah, before the establishment of the sanctuary on Zion, was not in Canaan but at Sinai (J's name, and P's) or Horeb (E and D) Ex. iii. 1, 1 Kings xix. 8, situated at a distance of 'eleven days by the Mt Seir road from Kadesh-Barnea' (Dt. i. 2),

4 LORD, when thou wentest forth out of Seir,
When thou marchedst out of the field of Edom,
The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped,
Yea, the clouds dropped water.
5 The mountains [1]flowed down at the presence of the LORD,
Even yon Sinai at the presence of the LORD, the God of Israel.
6 In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath,
In the days of Jael, [2]the high ways were unoccupied,
And the travellers walked through [3]byways.

[1] Or, *quaked* [2] Or, *the caravans ceased* [3] Heb. *crooked ways.*

probably in Midian, E. of the Gulf of 'Aḳăbah; from thence He issued across *the field* i.e. region *of Edom* into Canaan for the deliverance of His people. Cf. Dt. xxxiii. 2; Hab. iii. 3; Zech. ix. 14.

wentest forth...marchedst] Cf. Hab. iii. 12 f., and Ps. lxviii. 7 (imitated from here).

Seir] the mountain range E. of the 'Arābah, from the S. of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of 'Aḳăbah, in which *the field of Edom* lay, Gen. xxxii. 3, xxxvi. 8. Seir was the home of Esau, Dt. ii. 5; Josh. xxiv. 4.

the heavens also dropped] The object *water* is suspended till the next line, an instance of the parallelism noted above (1). But instead of *dropped* the LXX. A gives *were in commotion*, which perhaps implies the Hebr. word for *swayed*; this correction is adopted by some scholars. The last two lines of this *v.* and the second of *v.* 5 are copied in Ps. lxviii. 8.

5. *flowed down*] **streamed**, Is. lxiv. 1; the verb as in Is. xlv. 8, Job xxxvi. 28. The Hebr. form also allows the rendering *quaked* marg., LXX., from a different root.

Even yon Sinai at the presence of the LORD, the God of Israel] *yon Sinai*, pointing to the mountain, which however is not visible from the Great Plain. The mention of Sinai after the Theophany has advanced from Edom northwards introduces confusion, and the words lit. mean *this is Sinai*. They are probably a marginal gloss made by some early reader to whom the expressions in *vv.* 4, 5 suggested the descent of Jehovah upon Sinai for the giving of the law, Ex. xix. 18 ff., which is not referred to here. From the margin the words found their way into the text. They spoil the rhythm of the line.

6—8. The recent oppression.

6. *Shamgar the son of Anath*] See on iii. 31. It is extraordinary that the period of the oppression (*in the days of* as xv. 20) should be dated by Shamgar, if he was the deliverer referred to in iii. 31, and by Jael who slew the leader of the Canaanite army. We have seen reason to question the account of Shamgar in iii. 31; the context of the present passage clearly implies that he was not a deliverer but a foreign oppressor,

[1]The rulers ceased in Israel, they ceased, 7
Until that I Deborah arose,
That I arose a mother in Israel.
They chose new gods; 8
Then was war in the gates·

[1] Or, *The villages were unoccupied*

perhaps the predecessor of Sisera. Jael must be the same person as the heroine of *vv.* 24 ff.; but she belongs to the time, not of the oppression, but of its termination. When once Shamgar had been treated by late interpreters as an Israelite champion (iii. 31), the words *in the days of Jael* were probably inserted to mark the period more exactly.

the high ways were unoccupied] lit. 'the ways ceased' (*v.* 7), i.e. were disused, a doubtful meaning; render, with a slight change in the Hebr. pronunciation, **the caravans ceased** marg. The oppression had put a stop to all intercourse and trade, cf. ix. 25; travellers were driven to use circuitous routes. The next line runs, in parallelism with 'caravans,' *and walkers by paths walked by crooked ways*; the word *ways* is repeated incorrectly from the previous line; it is sufficiently implied by the plur. adj. *crooked*, as in Ps. cxxv. 5.

7. *The rulers ceased*] The Targ., Pesh., Jewish commentators followed by AV., treat the Hebr. *pĕrāzōn* (sing.), found only here and *v.* 11, as equivalent to *pĕrāzōth* (plur.) = 'open regions,' 'hamlets,' as opposed to walled towns, Ezek. xxxviii. 11, Zech. ii. 3; hence *perāzī* 'hamlet-dweller' 1 Sam. vi. 18 and, doubtfully, Perizzites i. 5 *n*. But this rendering *inhabitants of villages* does not suit *v.* 11; 'the righteous acts towards his peasantry' makes sense in English, but it does not fairly represent the harshness of the Hebrew. Another ancient rendering is 'powerful ones,' LXX. B, Vulg. fortes, *rulers*, more strictly 'power,' 'rule'; but this, though suitable for *v.* 11, has no support in usage or etymology. The meaning of the word here and in *v.* 11 must be left uncertain. In the following words *ceased in Israel, they ceased*, the repetition of the verb is either accidental, or a clause has dropped out.

Until that I Deborah arose] **till thou didst arise, Deborah, didst arise** etc. The verb is to be taken as 2nd fem. (archaic), on account of the address in *v.* 12, though the Massoretic scribes intended the form to be 1st pers., as it usually is: LXX., Vulg. 3rd pers., Pesh., Targ. 1st pers.

a mother in Israel] Cf. the use of *father* in Is. xxii. 21; Job xxix. 16.

8. It is still the period of the oppression, though *v.* 7 has for a moment anticipated matters by alluding to the 'rise' of Deborah. The first half of the verse yields no certain meaning. *They chose new gods*, lit. *it* (Israel) *chooses* etc., implies that Israel had been guilty of apostasy, and so was punished by an invasion; this is an idea quite foreign to the poem. Of the other renderings, *God chose new things*, nova bella elegit Dominus, Vulg., is ungrammatical in Hebr. and open to the objection that *Jehovah*, not *Elohim*, is the Name in the poem; *he chooses new judges* (Ewald) is based upon an erroneous interpretation of Elohim in Ex. xxi. 6 etc. *There was war in the gates* seems to point

Was there a shield or spear seen
Among forty thousand in Israel?
9 My heart is toward the governors of Israel,
[1]That offered themselves willingly among the people:
Bless ye the LORD.
10 Tell *of it*, ye that ride on white asses,
Ye that sit on rich carpets,
And ye that walk by the way.

[1] Or, *Ye that offered yourselves willingly among the people, bless &c.*

to some occasion (*then*) in the unsettled times before Deborah; in *v.* 11 *the gates* are those of the enemy; but the word for *war* is wholly anomalous. Disregarding the vowels, the consonants might be translated *then there was barley bread*, similarly LXX. A, Lucian; but no good sense can be extracted from this. The corruption is too deep-seated for emendation; probably an early attempt was made to correct the passage from Dt. xxxii. 17.

Was there a shield or spear seen] When the war broke out the able-bodied men in Israel had no proper weapons with which to meet the well-armed Canaanites; they were compelled to use such rude implements as they could find. 40,000 is a round number, not to be pressed; contrast the 301,000 men above twenty assigned in Num. xxvi. (P) to the six tribes who here take part in the war.

9—11. The celebration of Jehovah's acts. This seems to be the meaning of *v.* 11; *vv.* 9, 10 are exceedingly obscure, owing to the condition of the text. After dwelling upon Israel's sufferings, the poet, so far as we understand him, turns with thankful emotion to those who helped to put an end to them.

9. *governors*] Apparently the same word as in *v.* 14, though the form is slightly different, lit. *lawgivers*, Is. x. 1; but in a primitive community the lawgivers would be the military leaders (*v.* 14), hence tr. *commanders*, cf. Dt. xxxiii. 21, Is. xxxiii. 22; Vulg. principes.

That offered themselves willingly] See on *v.* 2. The verse seems to repeat the thought of *v.* 2, though the meaning of the latter is doubtful.

10. In this most obscure verse the poet is generally supposed to call upon various classes of Israelites to take their share in celebrating the victory.

Tell of *it*] So LXX., Vulg. The verb means *talk* (against) Ps. lxix. 12, or *speak* (to) Job xii. 8, but properly *to meditate upon*, *muse* Ps. cv. 2, cxlv. 5 etc.; it does not occur in early literature (Gen. xxiv. 63 is textually doubtful). The word is corrupt.

ye that ride on white asses] more exactly, as the Arabic shews, *tawny*, *reddish-grey*, *asses*, i.e. choice animals such as would be ridden by persons of dignity; the leading men in ancient Israel used to ride on asses, just as members of the ruling house in Zanzibar, and as the sheikhs in S. Arabia, do at the present day. Cf. x. 4, xii. 14, 2 Sam. xvii. 23, xix. 26.

[1]Far from the noise of archers, in the places of drawing 11
water,
There shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD,
Even the righteous acts [2]of his rule in Israel.
Then the people of the LORD went down to the gates.
Awake, awake, Deborah; 12
Awake, awake, utter a song:

[1] Or, *Because of the voice of the archers...there let them rehearse*
[2] Or, *toward his villages*

rich carpets] from a word which means *garment*, *raiment* (e.g. iii. 16), here supposed to refer to the *raiment*, i.e. saddle-cloths, of the asses. This is highly precarious, and the word, which is irregular though perhaps not impossible in form[1], must be considered corrupt. LXX. cod. A interprets the two lines as referring to a triumphal procession; LXX. cod. B, Targ., Vulg. *in judgement*, by a false etymology.

11. Another most obscure verse.

Far from] The prep. (a single letter in Hebr.) is suspicious; omitting it we may render *The voice of the archers...!*, or *Hark! the archers...*, resting after battle by the cool, shaded wells which are a favourite place of resort in the East. The word for *archers*, however, is uncertain; Budde conjectures *Hark! how merry they are...!* (the word as in Ex. xxxii. 6); *places of drawing water* as well as *archers*, only here.

There shall they rehearse] i.e. where the people congregate: the verb occurs once again with a somewhat similar meaning in xi. 40 of *celebrating* the daughter of Jephthah.

the righteous acts of the LORD] His *justice* displayed in delivering His people; Mic. vi. 5; 1 Sam. xii. 7, cf. Ps. ciii. 6.

of his rule] See on *v.* 7.

went down] The word is used of the advance of the Israelite army (*vv.* 13, 14), hence *the gates* will be those of the enemy. But the whole clause anticipates the description of the campaign, which does not begin till *v.* 12; it closely resembles the first half of *v.* 13, and may safely be expunged as a doublet, to the great improvement of rhythm and thought.

12. The real subject of the Song, introduced by the previous verses, begins here. Part II, *vv.* 12—22, describes the muster and the battle. Like Part I it consists of three stanzas; like Part III (which has two longer stanzas) it starts with a short prelude, *v.* 12 cf. *v.* 23.

Awake, awake, Deborah] We are transported to the time before the outbreak of the war; the poet calls upon Deborah to rouse herself and summon the tribes.

utter a song] lit. 'speak a song' (an unusual expression), not the present song of praise for victory won, but the war-song which stirred up the clans for battle, and promised them success (cf. iv. 6, 7, 14).

[1] Instead of *îm*, it has the plur. ending *în*, the normal form in Aramaic; which occurs, however, regularly in the Moabite Stone, and in the O.T. 25 or 26 times (15 in Job) in passages either dialectical or late.

Arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.

13 [1]Then came down a remnant of the nobles [2]*and* the people;
The LORD came down for me [3]against the mighty.

14 Out of Ephraim *came down* [4]they whose root is in Amalek;

[1] Or, *Then made he a remnant to have dominion over the nobles* and *the people; the LORD made me have dominion over the mighty*
[2] Or, as otherwise read, *the people of the LORD came down for me against* (or, *among*) *the mighty*
[3] Or, *among* See ch. xii. 15.

Arise, Barak] as the recognized military leader. A slight change of pronunciation gives the improved rendering *take prisoner those who took thee prisoner*, cf. 1 K. viii. 48, Is. xiv. 2; this is the proper meaning of the word, rather than 'lead captives in a triumph,' cf. Num. xxi. 1; Dt. xxi. 10; Ps. lxviii. 18. Barak himself had suffered at the enemy's hands; like Gideon (viii. 18), he had wrongs of his own to avenge.

The LXX. cod. A, however, suggests a better form of the original text than that which lies before us; eliminating doublets we obtain the following:

Rouse thee, rouse thee, Debōrah;
arouse the myriads of the people:
in thy strength arise, Barak,
capture thy captors, son of Abinōam.

We thus have a four lined verse, which is much wanted (cf. *v.* 23), and we get rid of *speak a song*. The second line of the present text is readily explained as a corruption of the first.

13—15a. The muster.

13. *Then came down a remnant*] The Massoretic scribes intended the verb to mean 'then may the remnant (i.e. of Israel) rule over the noble ones,' a prayer; but *the noble ones* like *the mighty* are most naturally Israelites, and after *then* the LXX. and other Verss. give a perfect. With a slight change of pronunciation the RV. renders 'Then came down a remnant of the nobles *and* the people,' inserting *and* without any right. The word for *remnant* means, not 'a mere handful,' but *survivors* from a battle, a sense unsuitable here; we may perhaps correct the form to *Israel* (Budde, Moore), and thus obtain a good parallelism to *the people of the LORD*, as the words are to be read (LXX. B). The whole verse may be restored:

Then came down Israel like noble ones,
The people of the LORD came down for Him as heroes.

For Him (LXX.) is preferable to *for me* in the text.

14. *Out of Ephraim* came down *they whose root is in Amalek*] i.e. those Ephraimites whose settled home was 'in the hill country of the Amalekites,' the latter term being used in xii. 15 to describe the situation of Pirathon in the land of Ephraim. But the poet can hardly mean that only the

After thee, Benjamin, among thy peoples;
Out of Machir came down [1]governors,
And out of Zebulun they that handle [2]the marshal's staff.
And [3]the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; 15
As was Issachar, so was Barak;

[1] Or, *lawgivers* [2] Or, *the staff of the scribe*
[3] Or, *my princes in Issachar*

Ephraimites of Pirathon came to the war, and there is no evidence that this district was the chief stronghold of Ephraim (Moore); moreover the Amalekites, though xii. 15 implies a settlement of them in the north, belong properly to the deserts far S. of Judah (see on i. 16). Lit. the words mean 'From E. their root (is) in Amalek,' a singularly harsh expression. No doubt for *Amalek* we should read *in the valley*, with LXX. A, Luc., and other Verss.; for *their root* a verb is wanted, as in the third line of this verse; 'they went' *shāru* (cf. Is. lvii. 9, and the use of *shâru=to pass along* in Assyrian), suggested by Winckler, *Altor. Forsch.* i. 193, suits the context, but is no more than a guess.

After thee, Benjamin, among thy peoples] The pronoun *thy* evidently refers to Ephraim; but if the Benjamites came 'after,' they could not be 'among' the people of Ephraim; so correct *after thee* to *thy brother* (LXX. A). *Thy brother Benjamin was among thy people* seems to mean that, Benjamin, being too small to provide a contingent under its own chiefs, marched in the ranks of Ephraim.

Machir] probably stands here for Manasseh, of which it formed the chief clan; according to Josh. xvii. 1 Machir was the eldest, according to Gen. l. 23, Num. xxvi. 29 the only, son of Manasseh. The settlement of Machir in Gilead E. of Jordan (Num. xxxii. 39 ff., Dt. iii. 15) probably did not take place till later times. The context shews that *governors* denote military leaders, see on *v.* 9, and cf. Dt. xxxiii. 21; in Gen. xlix. 10, Num. xxi. 18, Ps. lx. 7 the word is used of the *staff* or *wand* of a commander (translated *sceptre* in A. and RV.).

they that handle the marshal's staff] or, *that march with the marshal's staff*. Another designation of a *chief*, more exactly *one who writes, enrols* the muster of troops, cf. 2 Kings xxv. 19, Jer. lii. 25, 2 Chr. xxvi. 11 referring to the later organization of the army: he carried a baton as a badge of office.

15. *the princes of Issachar were with Deborah*] This seems to be the meaning; if Deborah belonged to the tribe of Issachar we can understand why she accompanied it; contrast iv. 5*n*. Issachar is not mentioned in ch. i. (see p. 3). The settlements of the tribe lay S.E. of the Plain, S. of Naphtali, and S.E. of Zebulun, to judge from Josh. xix. 17—23, which, however, defines the boundaries of a much later age. At this period Issachar had not earned the ignoble reputation with which it is taunted in Gen. xlix. 14 f.

As was Issachar, so was Barak] What can this mean? The construction of the sentence is harsh, and the second *Issachar* is omitted by LXX. and

Into the valley they rushed forth at his feet.
By the watercourses of Reuben
There were great resolves of heart.
16 Why satest thou among the sheepfolds,
To hear the pipings for the flocks?
At the watercourses of Reuben
There were great searchings of heart.
17 Gilead abode beyond Jordan:
And Dan, why did he remain in ships?

Vulg. We should expect the name of another tribe here; in view of *v.* 18, cf. iv. 6, Naphtali deserved honourable mention at this point.

Into the valley they rushed forth at his feet] i.e. at his heels, after him, cf. iv. 10, viii. 5. The rendering *they rushed* is a questionable paraphrase of the verb which lit. = *he was sent*, i.e. according to usage *was let go* Gen. xliv. 3, or *dismissed* Is. l. 1; the form must be incorrect. Winckler repeats the verb which he suggests for *v.* 14 *a*.

15 b—**18**. The reluctant and the ready.

By the watercourses of Reuben] For the rendering *watercourses* cf. Job xx. 17. But the territory of Reuben was dry rather than well-watered (like that of Gad); perhaps the old rendering *divisions* (LXX., Vulg.), i.e. sections of the tribe, is to be preferred; for this use of the word cf. 2 Chr. xxxv. 5. Instead of *resolves*, lit. *decisions*, the form in *v.* 16b is better, *soundings*, lit. *investigations*, cf. 1 Sam. xx. 12 'when I have *sounded* my father.' Transl. *Among the divisions of Reuben great were the soundings of heart*, i.e. to find out one another's sentiments. Note the character of Reuben given in Gen. xlix. 4.

16. *among the sheepfolds*] Gen xlix. 14, cf. Ps. lxviii. 13; the meaning is uncertain; it ought to be 'fire-places' or 'ash-heaps,' according to the etymology of the Hebr. word.

the pipings for the flocks] The root is used of *whistling*, *hissing*, in order to call together, Is. v. 26, vii. 18; Zech. x. 8; cf. *pastoria sibila* of Ovid, *Met.* xiii. 785 (Moore); it does not mean 'to play on the flute.' The last line of this verse is incorrectly repeated from 15 b.

Reuben was settled E. of the Jordan, N. of Moab, and probably became to a great extent merged in the native population; see the prayer in Dt. xxxiii. 6. Already the tribe was losing political importance; it preferred an isolated, agricultural life to taking part in the national movement.

Gilead] is usually the country occupied by the Israelites on the E. of the Jordan, from the Yarmuk (Sherī'at el-Menādire) in the N. to the valley of Heshbon (Wadi Ḥesbān) in the S. Reuben inhabited the lower part, and East-Manasseh, probably at a later period, obtained possession of the upper. Here Gilead is not a country but a tribe, and, we may suppose, stands for Gad.

Dan, why did he remain in ships?] An obscure line. The reference is not to the southern settlements of Dan (Josh. xix. 40 ff.), but to

Asher sat still at the [1]haven of the sea,
And abode by his creeks.
Zebulun was a people that jeoparded their lives unto 18
the death,
And Naphtali, upon the high places of the field.
The kings came and fought; 19
Then fought the kings of Canaan,
In Taanach by the waters of Megiddo·

[1] Or, *shore*

the northern (ch. xviii. 27 ff.): the migration described in the latter passage must have taken place before the time of this Ode; see on i. 34. Laish (Tell el-Ḳādī, near Bāniās), however, is far inland; Dan nowhere reached the sea-coast. Hence *remain in ships* is taken to mean 'sojourns near the sea-faring people.' The verb strictly = 'to dwell as a protected alien,' and might imply that Dan lived in dependence upon a powerful neighbour; but to take *ships* as = 'shipping people,' i.e. the Phoenicians, is to strain the language. *Sojourns in ships* might perhaps mean that the Danites had to work the Phoenician galleys, and so were not at liberty to take up the cause of their Israelite brethren (so Budde *Comment.*, and E. Meyer).

Asher] occupied the *Hinterland* of the Phoenician coast, and perhaps was not sufficiently independent of the Phoenicians to join the Israelite muster.

by his creeks] The word occurs only here; but light is thrown upon it by Arabic, which uses nouns from the same root in the sense of a *gap* by which boats ascend the *mouth* of a river; so render **landing-places**.

In Gen. xlix. 13 the expressions 'dwells by the sea shore,' 'the shore of ships' are found in connexion with Zebulun, and may be borrowed from here. Lagrange, on the contrary, thinks that they are inserted here from Gen. xlix., and that Dan and Asher are foreign to the original text; he retains *creeks* in the sense of *gorges* for Gilead. This is one way of overcoming the difficulties.

18. In contrast to the lethargy of the tribes on the E. and N. was the heroic valour of Zebulun and Naphtali.

the high places of the field] is hardly applicable to the field of battle, which was a plain; perhaps the general meaning is, the two tribes came fearlessly down from their mountain homes prepared to sacrifice all for the cause. See further on iv. 6.

19—22. The battle.

19. *the kings of Canaan*] the chiefs of the principal Canaanite cities in the Plain and neighbourhood; Sisera, if not their overlord, was their leader. The *kings of Canaan* are mentioned in the Amarna letters, e.g. 101, 13; cf. Josh. v. 1, and contrast the unhistorical term *king of C.* in ch. iv. 2 *n*.

Taanach...Megiddo] See on i. 27; *the waters of M.* are the Kishon. The two towns are on the left bank of the river; ch. iv. rather implies

They took no gain of money.
20 They fought from heaven,
The stars in their courses fought against Sisera.
21 The river Kishon swept them away,
That ancient river, the river Kishon.
O my soul, [1]march on with strength.
22 Then did the horsehoofs stamp
By reason of the pransings, the pransings of their strong ones.

[1] Or, *thou hast trodden down strength*

that the battle took place at the foot of Tabor, which is about 15 m. from Taanach, cf. iv. 14.

They took no gain of money] They expected spoil (*v.* 30, cf. Ex. xv. 9), but their expectations were disappointed.

20. Render with a slight change of the stop :

From heaven fought the stars :
From their highways they fought with Sisera.

The kings fought...The stars fought] A splendid contrast. Jehovah used the forces of nature as His allies and instruments; cf. Josh. x. 11 ; 1 Sam. vii. 10; Ps. xviii. 14; Jer. xxiii. 19. Here it was the tempest (*v.* 4 f.), flooding the Kishon (*v.* 21), which providentially helped the Israelites.

21. *swept them away*] The battle must have taken place in the winter or spring, for in summer the Kishon runs low. The fate of Sisera's host finds a parallel in the battle of Mt Tabor between the army of Napoleon and the Turks, Apr. 16, 1799, when many of the latter were drowned when attempting to escape across a part of the plain inundated by the Kishon.

That ancient river] lit. *torrent of antiquity*, so LXX. B, Targ. ('where the wonders and mighty deeds *of old* were wrought for Israel'). Another translation, based on Arabic usage, is *torrent of onsets* ; or, developing the meaning of the root 'be before, in front,' we might render *on-rushing torrent*, alluding to the swollen waters. The exact sense must remain obscure.

O my soul, march on with strength] A questionable rendering, for the verb is not an imperative. The text as it stands is probably an attempt to make some sense of an ancient corruption. The line may have formed part of the previous one: 'the torrent of Kishon trode them down mightily'—but to reconstruct the original form of the sentence is hopeless.

22. *did...stamp*] or *hammered* (i.e. the earth); the same verb as in *v.* 26. In the next line the Hebrew words imitate the gallop of horses in precipitate flight. Cf. Nahum iii. 2. *Their strong ones* are the enemy's steeds; cf. Jer. viii. 16, xlvii. 3.

Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, 23
Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof;
Because they came not to the help of the LORD,
To the help of the LORD [1]against the mighty.
Blessed [2]above women shall Jael be, 24
The wife of Heber the Kenite,
Blessed shall she be [2]above women in the tent.
He asked water, *and* she gave him milk; 25
She brought him butter in a lordly dish.

[1] Or, *among* [2] Or, *of*

Part iii. *vv.* 23—31 a. The death of Sisera. The four-lined verse 23 forms a prelude; cf. the opening of Part ii.

23. *Curse ye Meroz*] Probably this village lay on the route of Sisera's flight, and the inhabitants, though they were Israelites, made no effort to help their kinsmen in following up the victory. Similarly Succoth and Penuel refused to give Gideon assistance, viii. 5—9. The situation of Meroz is unknown.

the angel of the LORD] Perhaps Jehovah Himself in manifestation; see on ii. 1. But it is conceivable that *the angel* is a later insertion designed to soften the direct intervention of Jehovah at this point.

against the mighty] or *among the mighty* (marg.), or, with a slight change, *as heroes*, cf. *v.* 13 *n.*

24. The courageous devotion of Jael is set effectively against the unpatriotic selfishness of Meroz. Jael here receives enthusiastic praise for what strikes us as nothing less than a treacherous murder. According to the standards of the times, however, it would not appear in this light at all, and such are the standards by which we must judge the morality of the deed.

the wife of Heber the Kenite] interrupts the parallelism and spoils the rhythm of the verse; it is evidently a gloss from iv. 17, where the words are in place.

women in the tent] The Bedouin are described as *dwellers in tents* iv. 11, viii. 11; Jer. xxxv. 7

25. The original is more forcible·

Water he asked, milk she gave,
In a bowl fit for nobles she offered him curd.

A bowl of (i.e. fit for) *nobles* was a large, rich bowl. The word, only here and vi. 38 in Hebr., is mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions as an object of plunder or tribute, e.g. a *bowl* was brought to Shalmaneser by Jehu (Schrader, *COT.*[2] i. p. 199). Not *butter*, which the Bedouin do not use, but *curdled milk* is meant, a refreshing drink such as would be offered to a guest, Gen. xviii. 8.

26 She put her hand to the [1]nail,
And her right hand to the workmen's hammer;
And with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote through his head,
Yea, she pierced and struck through his temples.
27 At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay:
At her feet he bowed, he fell:
Where he bowed, there he fell down [2]dead.

[1] Or, *tent-pin* [2] Or, *overpowered*

26. While he was standing (*v.* 27) and about to drink, Jael dealt him a shattering blow with a wooden implement. We are tempted to suppose that, if he had drunk, he would have been protected by the laws of Eastern hospitality. So in *The Talisman*, Sir Walter Scott makes Saladin dash the cup from the hand of the Grand Master of the Templars before assassinating him; had he tasted it, he would have been safe. *Talisman* p. 535 (ed. 1879 A. and C. Black). In iv. 19, however, Jael has no scruples about killing Sisera after he has partaken of her hospitality.

According to the parallelism of Hebr. poetry *her hand* and *her right hand* mean the same thing; and so should *nail* and *workmen's hammer*. But can the latter term be thus rendered? *workmen* ought rather to be *sufferers*, *worn out* with toil and misery, Job iii. 20, xx. 22; the meaning *labourer* is only found in Prov. xvi. 26 (late); moreover *hammer* (a doubtful form, and a different word from *mallet* in iv. 21) can hardly be another name for *nail* or *tent-peg*. What is meant by this synonym we do not know; but it is clear that Jael used one weapon, not two. The account in iv. 21 gives a different version of the tradition. Translate the last two lines:

And she hammered Sisera, shattered his head,
And crushed and clave his temples.

The word rendered *clave* might perhaps mean *caused to pass away*, *made to vanish*; properly it=*pass on*, or *through*, here apparently in the sense of *piercing*, cf. Job xx. 24. The description is that of a heavy, crushing blow.

27. The effect of the blow, vividly depicted in short, abrupt words; from a standing position his body collapsed; lit. 'he dropped on his knees, fell headlong, and lay a broken wreck upon the ground.' For *he bowed* cf. vii. 5, 6, Is. xlvi. 1; *he fell* cf. 1 Sam. xxviii. 20; *he lay* cf. Lam. ii. 21; *dead* lit. 'destroyed,' 'spoiled,' cf. Jer. iv. 30, Is. xxxiii. 1.

The second line, *at her feet he bowed, he fell* is probably an erroneous repetition from the first.

28—30. The mother of Sisera. The last scene is a fine piece of dramatic irony. The king's mother is pictured as waiting eagerly for her son's return; her disappointment is left to the imagination.

Through the window she looked forth, and cried, 28
The mother of Sisera *cried* through the lattice,
Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the [1]wheels of his chariots?
Her wise ladies answered her, 29
[2]Yea, she returned answer to herself,
Have they not found, have they not divided the spoil? 30
A damsel, two damsels to every man;
To Sisera a spoil of [3]divers colours,
A spoil of [3]divers colours of embroidery,
Of [3]divers colours of embroidery on both sides, on the necks of the spoil?

[1] Heb. *steps.* [2] Or, (*Yet she repeateth her words unto herself,*)
[3] Or, *dyed garments*

28. For a translation of the verse see p. 54. *Out of the window looked* cf. 2 Sam. vi. 16; 2 Kings ix. 30. *Lattice*, again in Prov. vii. 6 ‖ *window*; the rendering comes from LXX. A; cod. B gives 'a hole in the wall.'

and cried] Only here; in Aramaic the word means 'shout,' 'sound' the clarion; so we might render *cried shrilly*. But this cannot be pronounced certain; we should expect a parallel to *looked out*, as LXX. A ('considered well') and Targ. ('looked attentively') suggest.

29. The queen-mother is surrounded by *her princesses* in the harîm of the palace. The wisest of them will soon discover their folly! The mother 'tries to silence her presentiment by the same kind of answer which her sage companions give her' (Moore).

30. The verse has suffered from corrupt repetitions: *spoil* four times, *divers colours* three times. Omitting the superfluous words we may restore the text as follows:

Are they not finding, dividing the spoil?
a wench or two for each man;
a spoil of dyed garments for Sisera;
a broidered cloth or two for my neck (?).

A wench or two: the word (only here in this sense in the O.T.) is used by Mesha in his inscription of the women captured from the Israelites (Moab. St. l. 17). *Spoil of dyed garments* lit. 'booty of dyes,' i.e. dyed stuffs. *A broidered cloth or two*, the construction is the same as in line 2; for the word cf. Ezek. xvi. 10, 13, 18; Ps. xlv. 14; strictly it means *variegated work*, either woven or embroidered, see Ex. xxxviii. 23; spoils of this kind were much valued, cf. 2 Sam. i. 24. The end of the last line is obscure: the text runs *for the necks of the spoil*, as though these rich stuffs would be used to caparison the animals led in the triumph of the captors! The parallelism suggests a personal reference corresponding to *Sisera*; so LXX. 'for his neck as a spoil.' Ewald ingeniously

31 So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD:
But let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.
And the land had rest forty years.

proposed for the last word *queen* (Ps. xliv. 9; Neh. ii. 6), changing only one letter. On the whole it seems preferable to omit the word, and read *for my neck* or *for his neck*; but there can be no certainty about the restoration.

31. Conclusion.

So let all thine enemies perish] With the same completeness, with the same overthrow of proud confidence. The language recalls Ps. lxviii. 2, 3, xcii. 9. It is taken for granted that Israel's enemies are Jehovah's also. Jehovah's *friends* are compared to the rising of the sun, an impressive figure which fitly closes the Ode. It is remarkable to find such an expression as *them that love him* at this early date. This idea is strongly characteristic of Deut., and of Dtc. passages in the Hexateuch, e.g. Ex. xx. 6=Dt. v. 10; cf. the late Pss. xxxi. 23, xcvii. 10, cxlv. 20.

And the land had rest] A chronological note added by the RD; see on iii. 11.

Chs. vi.—viii. *Gideon delivers Israel from the Midianites.*

For some years the Midianites had been the terror of Central Palestine. These nomad Arabs from the S.E. desert used to pour into the country during harvest time, and devastate the fertile neighbourhood of Shechem and the plain of Jezreel. At last Gideon, a Manassite belonging to the clan of Abiezer, contrived with a small band of fellow clansmen to rid the land of this intolerable scourge: he inflicted a severe defeat upon the invaders, and put their chiefs to death. As a trophy of the victory he made out of the spoils an *ephod*, which he set up in the sanctuary of Jehovah at Ophrah, his native village, where he spent the rest of his days with much dignity and influence. The 'day of Midian' was long remembered as a notable instance of Jehovah's intervention on behalf of Israel: see Is. ix. 4, x. 26, Ps. lxxxiii. 9—12.

The main outlines of the story are clear, but the details raise problems which have not yet been solved. Different traditions have been pieced together; these again have received later additions; and the various elements are interwoven in a manner which renders the literary analysis of these chapters unusually difficult and uncertain. (*a*) It will be noticed at once that viii. 4—21 is not the sequel of the preceding narrative. In viii. 4—21 Gideon with 300 men pursues the Midianite kings Zeba and Zalmunna on the E. of the Jordan as far as the edge of the desert, captures them, and slays them with his own hand; on one of their forays they had murdered his brothers at Tabor; the motive of Gideon's pursuit is to satisfy his personal revenge. In vi. 1—viii. 3 Gideon is called by God to deliver Israel from the repeated incursions of the

Midianites; he attacks their camp near Mt Gilboa and creates a disastrous panic; the men of Ephraim are summoned to his aid, and they cut off the fugitives at the fords of Jordan; they capture and kill the two princes Oreb and Zeeb. Here the whole action, like the deliverance, is national. In vii. 25 b and viii. 10 b an editor has tried to harmonize the two accounts. They do not necessarily contradict one another. It is quite likely that private motives spurred Gideon to place himself at the head of a united resistance, when God called him, and that he took the opportunity to wipe off a score of his own against the common enemy. (*b*) But vi. 1—viii. 3 itself is not a consistent whole. Thus the call of Gideon is described in vi. 11—24 and again, altogether differently, in vi. 25—32; the summons to the neighbouring tribes is sent out before the battle in vi. 35, and after it in vii. 23; two traditions seem to be mingled in the account of the attack, vii. 15—21, in one of them the *trumpets* were remembered as a feature of the story, in the other the *torches* and *pitchers*.

It is difficult to decide whether the antecedents of viii. 4—21 can or cannot be traced in the composite narrative, vi. 1—viii. 3. Some critics regard viii. 4—21 as an excerpt from a third source and unrelated to what precedes; others attempt to connect it with one of the two accounts of Gideon's call and his attack upon the camp near Mt Gilboa. On the one hand viii. 4—21 does not suggest that a disastrous battle and a desperate flight had just occurred; the Midianite kings are encamped on the edge of the E. desert in careless security; apparently they have returned from a foray in the West, most likely the one in which they killed Gideon's brothers; they do not suspect any pursuit. But, on the other hand, this episode does imply some previous account of Gideon and of a Midianite invasion; possibly too (but this is more questionable), some tradition of a recent attack upon the Midianites on the W. of Jordan (cf. viii. 5). We may therefore connect vi. 2—6 (in part), 11—24, 34, vii. 1, 16—21 (in part) with viii. 4—21, remembering, however, that the connexion with vii. 1, 16—21 (in part) is less evident. The other narrative, generally allowed to be the later of the two, will then consist of vi. 7—10, 25—32, 33, 35 a, 36—40, vii. 9—15, 16—21 (in part), 22—viii. 3.

It will be seen that both in the older (viii. 4) and in the later narrative (viii. 2 f.) Gideon's force was composed of his own Abiezrites; the number 300 seems to have been a fixed element in the general tradition. The description of the way in which the immense host of volunteers was reduced to this figure, vi. 35 f., vii. 2—8, must have been added later to the two main narratives.

The closing verses, viii. 22—35, contain the loose ends of the fragmentary traditions which have been pieced together in the preceding history. The *ephod* belongs to the archaic stage of religion; *vv.* 24—27 a (to *Ophrah*) fit in very well as the conclusion of the early narrative, viii. 4—21. As it stands, *v.* 29 is obviously out of place after *v.* 27, but it would form a suitable sequel to *v.* 3. The offer and refusal of the kingship, *vv.* 22, 23, betray the theocratic bias of a later age. Verses 30—32 furnish the transition to the story of Abimelech, and shew signs

6 And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the
sight of the LORD: and the LORD delivered them into the
2 hand of Midian seven years. And the hand of Midian
prevailed against Israel: and because of Midian the children

of a late editorial hand. In verses 27 b, 28, 33—35, as in vi. 1 and here and there in vi. 2—6, we recognize the familiar handiwork of the Deuteronomic redactor, who, in his customary manner, provided the whole story with introduction and conclusion, and interpreted it on his own religious principles.

The preceding analysis is merely an attempt to account for the way in which the narrative has been put together. The text as we have it contains inconsistent and duplicate versions, which to a certain extent can be distinguished, but it is impossible to trace them apart all the way through.

1—6. *The Midianite oppression.*

1. The Deuteronomic editor introduces a fresh subject in his accustomed manner: cf. ii. 11, 14, iii. 7, iv. 1.

Midian] The Midianites had their homes on the E. of the 'Arābah; see Gen. xxv. 6. At times they are found as far N. as Moab (Gen. xxxvi. 35, Num. xxii. 4, xxv. 15 ff., xxxi. 1—12), while some section of them lived as far S. as the Gulf of 'Aḳābah; a trace of this southern settlement was long preserved in the name of the town called Modiana by Ptolemy (vi. 7, 2) and Madyan by Arab geographers, 75 miles S. of Elath; cf. Euseb., *Onom. Sacr.*, 136 f. Again, the Midianites are said to have inhabited the Sinaitic peninsula. Horeb, the mountain of God, lay in their territory, Ex. ii. 15 ff., iii. 1, cf. Hab. iii. 7; from 1 Kings xi. 18 Midian appears to be a district between Edom and Paran on the way to Egypt, i.e. in the N.E. of the Sinaitic desert. These various statements do not enable us to fix any exact boundaries; probably the Midianites shifted their territory in the course of ages. They ranged over the desert E. and S. of Palestine, engaged chiefly in warfare and in escorting trade-caravans (Gen. xxxvii. 28, Is. lx. 6). The tendency of Arab tribes was to move northwards; accordingly we find the Midianites advancing up the desert E. of the caravan-route, and making forays from time to time into Edom[1], Moab, and Gilead; on this occasion they even enter Palestine, probably by the valleys Wadi Jālūd or W. Fara', which lead up from the Jordan into the central district. They were tempted by the harvests, and their incursions, here described as taking place repeatedly, caused wide-spread misery. The Bedouin of the desert always looked upon the agricultural population as lawful prey.

2. *the hand...prevailed*] A formula of RD; cf. iii. 10.

[1] Ewald made the attractive suggestion that the battle alluded to in Gen. xxxvi. 35 may have been a secondary result of Gideon's victory described here. *Hist. Isr.* ii. 336.

of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains,
and the caves, and the strong holds. And so it was, when 3
Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the
Amalekites, and the children of the east; they came up
against them; and they encamped against them, and destroy- 4
ed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and
left no sustenance in Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass.
For they came up with their cattle and their tents, they came 5
in as locusts for multitude; both they and their camels were
without number: and they came into the land to destroy it.
And Israel was brought very low because of Midian; and 6
the children of Israel cried unto the LORD.

And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried 7
unto the LORD because of Midian, that the LORD sent a 8

dens] This translation is a guess from the context. The mention of *caves* prepares the way for 11 b; for *strong holds* cf. 1 Sam. xxiii. 14, 19, 29 etc. Under pressure from the Philistines at a later time similar refuges were used, 1 Sam. xiii. 6.

3. *the Amalekites*] Hereditary foes of Israel, Ex. xvii. 8 ff.; see on iii. 13. The *children of the East* were Bedouin from the desert E. of Moab and Ammon; see Jer. xlix. 28, Ezek. xxv. 4, 10. These tribes appear again in *v.* 33 and vii. 12. There is no reason why they should not have joined the Midianite raids, but they do not belong to the earlier form of the tradition which is concerned with the Midianites only.

4. *Gaza*] in the far south-west, near the coast; a long way from the Manassite district.

5. *as locusts*] Repeated in vii. 12; for the comparison see Jer. xlvi. 23. The text of *vv.* 3—5 shews signs of a mixed origin. Thus the grammar is irregular, frequentative tenses in *v.* 3 are followed by narrative aorists in *v.* 4, and these again by frequentatives in *v.* 5. Notice the repetition of *came up* in *v.* 3 and *came into* in *v.* 5; *the Amalekites, and the children of the east* is due to the same hand as *v.* 33 and vii. 12; *till thou come to Gaza* has the look of an editorial exaggeration. Perhaps in their simplest form the verses may have run: "(3) And it used to happen that when Israel had sown, Midian used to come up against him, (4) and they used to leave no sustenance...nor ass, (5) for they and their cattle used to come up, and their tents, and come into the land to destroy it." This may have formed the introduction to the earlier of the two narratives which are combined in vi.—viii.; and the remaining sentences may have been derived from the introduction to the later of the two narratives (Moore, Nowack, Lagrange), or they may be merely glosses (Budde). The whole passage has been pieced together by the Dtc. editor.

6. *and...cried*] Editorial formula; see iii. 9 *n*.

prophet unto the children of Israel: and he said unto them,
Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, I brought you up
from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of
9 bondage; and I delivered you out of the hand of the
Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you,
and drave them out from before you, and gave you their
10 land; and I said unto you, I am the LORD your God; ye
shall not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye
dwell: but ye have not hearkened unto my voice.

7—10. *A prophet is sent with a reproof.*

8. *a prophet*] This prophetic expostulation reminds us of the words of the Angel in ii. 1 b—5 a, of Jehovah in x. 11—16, of Samuel in 1 Sam. vii. 3 f., x. 17—19, xii. 6—25; cf. also 2 Kings xvii. 35—40. The prophet here is anonymous. His appeal for loyalty is based upon (*a*) the deliverance from Egypt, which was regarded by the earliest prophets as the starting-point of Israel's career as the people of Jehovah, Am. ii. 10, iii. 1, ix. 7, Hos. xi. 1, xii. 9, 13, xiii. 4, and (*b*) the law in Ex. xx. 2 f. (=Dt. v. 7) requiring the exclusive worship of Jehovah.

9. *that oppressed you*] See on ii. 18; *and drave them out* cf. Ex. xxxiv. 11 JE, Josh. xxiv. 18 E. Verses 8 and 9 are repeated in 1 Sam. x. 18, possibly copied from here.

The aim of *vv.* 7—10 is to enforce the principle that reformation must precede deliverance. But the prophet has hardly reached this point when his speech is abruptly broken off, and one of the main narratives begins (11—24). These verses must be earlier than the Dtc. compiler, who would not have curtailed the speech had he inserted it himself. They seem to be the handiwork of the Elohistic school; thus *because of* in *v.* 7 (an uncommon expression in Hebr.), cf. Gen. xxi. 11, 25, Num. xii. 1 etc. E; *brought you up from Egypt v.* 8, cf. Gen. xlvi. 4, l. 24, Josh. xxiv. 17 E (also in J); *from the house of bondage v.* 8, cf. Ex. xiii. 3, 14 JE, xx. 2 E, Josh. xxiv. 17 E (also in D); *the Amorites v.* 9, cf. Gen. xv. 16, Num. xxi. 13, 21, 31, Josh. xxiv. 8, 15, 18 etc. E, and see i. 34 *n*. The parallels with Josh. xxiv. 15—20 are particularly noticeable.

11—24. *The call of Gideon.* Sequel of 2—6 a.

11. *the angel of the LORD*] i.e. Jehovah Himself in manifestation; see on ii. 1. Closely parallel are the appearances in xiii. 3—23 and Gen. xviii. J; the Angel or Messenger appears in human form, and in the end is recognized as Jehovah; cf. also Gen. xvi. 7—14 J, xxxii. 24—30 J (cf. Hos. xii. 4 f.), Ex. iii. 2—6 E. Here the Angel shews himself in the guise of a 'traveller unknown,' resting under a tree, with a staff in his hand. Both here and in ch. xiii. the thought and language contain much in common with the narratives of J in the Pentateuch.

And the angel of the LORD came, and sat under the [1]oak 11
which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite:
and his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress,
to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the LORD 12
appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with
thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto 13
him, Oh my lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all
this befallen us? and where be all his wondrous works
which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD
bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath cast us off,

[1] Or, *terebinth*

the oak] Marg. *terebinth*, Hebr. *'ēlāh*; it is better to keep the rendering *oak* for the Hebr. *'allāh*, *'allōn*. The terebinth or turpentine tree bears a resemblance to the oak, but it grows singly, not in clumps. The terebinth at Ophrah was no doubt a sacred tree, hence the Angel appeared under it; for the same reason Jehovah appeared 'among the terebinths of Mamre' Gen. xviii. 1, cf. xiii. 18 J. Sacred trees are still to be met with in Palestine (Curtis, *Primitive Sem. Religion To-day*, pp. 90 ff.).

in Ophrah] called *O. of the Abiezrites* in *v.* 24, viii. 32, to distinguish it from the Benjamite Ophrah Josh. xviii. 23, 1 Sam. xiii. 17. The town probably lay to the S. of the Great Plain and not far from Shechem (ch. ix.), but the site is unknown. The tree, not Ophrah, was the property of Joash; in the parallel account, *vv.* 25—32, it is the local altar which belonged to him. Abiezer was a clan of Manasseh, Num. xxvi. 30, Josh. xvii. 2.

the winepress] where the grapes were trodden. It was a tank or trough (Hebr. *gath*) excavated in the rock, and connected by a drain with the *wine vat* (Hebr. *yeḳeb* vii. 25), into which the juice ran. As the threshing-floor (*v.* 37) was always situated in an exposed place, Gideon had to use the winepress in order to escape notice, and there the corn could only be 'beaten out' with a stick in small quantities at a time; cf. Ruth ii. 17.

12. *The LORD is with thee*] Cf. *v.* 16: an assurance given to chosen instruments of God's purpose, such as Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 15, Moses, Ex. iii. 12, Joshua, Josh. i. 5. The Angel noticed the energy which Gideon put into his work; he was a *strong man*, like Jephthah xi. 1. The winepress must have been situated near the terebinth.

13. *his wondrous works...from Egypt*] Cf. Ex. iii. 20, xxxiv. 10, Josh. iii. 5 J. Tradition, handed down from father to son (Ps. xliv. 1, lxxviii. 3), regarded the deliverance from Egypt and the divine interventions during the wanderings as the starting-point and evidence of Jehovah's special relation to Israel. These words have the appearance of a later insertion.

14 and delivered us into the hand of Midian. And the LORD
[1]looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and save
Israel from the hand of Midian: have not I sent thee?
15 And he said unto him, Oh Lord, wherewith shall I save
Israel? behold, my [2]family is the poorest in Manasseh, and
16 I am the least in my father's house. And the LORD said
unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite
17 the Midianites as one man. And he said unto him, If now
I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that it
18 is thou that talkest with me. Depart not hence, I pray thee,

[1] Or, *turned towards* [2] Heb. *thousand.*

14. *the LORD* **turned towards** *him*] The narrator lets us into the secret, though Gideon has not yet recognized who the Traveller is; LXX. here and in *v.* 16 (cf. LXX. Ex. iv. 24) reads 'the angel of the Lord,' an obvious way of introducing consistency.

Go in this thy might] See on *v.* 12. Gideon's natural qualities were capable of being set to higher tasks. 'God takes men as they are and makes them what they are not.'

have not I sent thee?] **do not I send thee?** The language of the speaker both here and in *v.* 16 seems to us to betray his real character; but Gideon does not see through the disguise till *v.* 22.

15. *Oh Lord*] Read with a slight change, **Oh my lord** as in *v.* 13.

my family...the least] Saul used the same plea, 1 Sam. ix. 21. 'Family' is lit. 'thousand,' a division of the tribe which corresponds to a 'clan' (*mishpāḥāh*); the 'clan' or 'thousand' consisted of several 'fathers' houses,' the 'house' of a number of individuals; see 1 Sam. x. 19—21.

16. *Surely I will be with thee*] The same words as in Ex. iii. 12 E. The LXX. reads 'And the Angel of the Lord said unto him, The Lord will be with thee'; hence Moore and Budde emend 'and he said, Jehovah will be with thee.' If the text be allowed to stand, we must suppose that the narrator is thinking of the reader, who knows the secret, rather than of Gideon, who is still in ignorance.

17. *shew me a sign that it is thou*] Gideon asks for a sign that it is indeed Jehovah who charges him with this great undertaking (*vv.* 14, 16); but in the following verse Gideon clearly does not know who is addressing him. Jehovah wills partly to retain and partly to withdraw the disguise. His words suggest to Gideon that He is no ordinary stranger. But some scholars think that these words (17b) cannot come from the same hand as *v.* 18.

18. *Depart not hence*] is the natural sequel of 17a. Like Abraham (Gen. xviii. 3 ff.) and Manoah (ch. xiii. 15), Gideon presses hospitality upon the stranger. He had to run home in order to prepare the food, for the winepress was outside the village.

until I come unto thee, and bring forth my [1]present, and lay it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again. And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and un- 19
leavened cakes of an ephah of meal: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the [2]oak, and presented it. And the angel of God 20
said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of 21
the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there went up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and the angel

[1] Or, *offering* [2] Or, *terebinth*

my present] The word has this meaning in iii. 15, 17, Gen. xxxii. 13 ff., xxxiii. 10, xliii. 11 ff. etc.; but it is used more frequently of an *offering* made to God, whether of animals or of the fruit of the earth, e.g. Gen. iv. 3—5, 1 Sam. ii. 17, 29; in the later ritual usage it becomes the technical term for the *meal-* or *grain-offering*, Ezek. xlvi. 14, and always in P. In the present case Gideon prepares a present of food for his guest, not an offering to God; but in view of what happened the writer chose a word which might bear either sense. The LXX. definitely renders 'sacrifice.' Cf. xiii. 19.

19. *a kid*] Cf. xiii. 15, 19 and Gen. xviii. 7 (a calf). *An ephah* was approximately equivalent to our bushel; in Gen. xviii. 6 Abraham orders the same quantity, 'three scahs' (=one ephah, cf. Is. v. 10 *ephah* in LXX. =μέτρα τρία). *Unleavened cakes* could be made rapidly, 1 Sam. xxviii. 24; for the *basket* and *pot* cf. Gen. xl. 16 ff., 1 Sam. ii. 14.

and presented it] lit. 'brought it near,' cf. Gen. xxvii. 25. Perhaps we should read with the LXX. *and drew near* (involving only a change of vowels), for the meal has not yet passed out of Gideon's hands; he is expecting to be told what to do with it.

20. He is now told to set down the flesh and the cakes upon the rock, and to pour out the broth. The latter act was distinctly sacrificial, though broth is not used elsewhere for a libation. There is reason to think that this verse did not belong to the original form of the narrative; note the terms 'messenger of *God*,' 'rock' (a different word from 'rock' in *v.* 21). At the same time a sentence is required, in view of *v.* 21, stating that Gideon set down the meal.

21. *fire...and consumed*] The food intended for a meal is converted into a sacrifice, and supernatural fire betokens the divine acceptance; cf. xiii. 20, 1 Kings xviii. 38, 2 Chr. vii. 1, Lev. ix. 24, 2 Macc. ii. 10.

and the angel of the LORD departed] But in *v.* 23 Jehovah is still present and speaks to Gideon. Perhaps some distinction was felt at this point between Jehovah and the Angel of Jehovah; the partial manifestation was withdrawn, Jehovah Himself remained. Moore's

22 of the LORD departed out of his sight. And Gideon saw that
he was the angel of the LORD; and Gideon said, Alas, O
Lord GOD! forasmuch as I have seen the angel of the LORD
23 face to face. And the LORD said unto him, Peace be unto
24 thee; fear not: thou shalt not die. Then Gideon built an
altar there unto the LORD, and called it [1] Jehovah-shalom:
unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

[1] That is, *The LORD is peace.*

suggestion that these words were inserted on the analogy of xiii. 20 seems hardly necessary.

22. Now at last Gideon recognizes the nature of his Guest; he is overwhelmed with terror, for he has intruded upon the holiness of God, and death must be the penalty; cf. xiii. 22 and Gen. xvi. 13, xxxii. 30, Ex. xxxiii. 20 (all J), Dt. iv. 33, v. 24, 26, Is. vi. 5.

23. *Peace be unto thee*] Jehovah cherishes no resentment, nothing but good-will, cf. Gen. xliii. 23. This idea is finely developed by a prophet in Is. liv. 9, 10.

24. *built an altar there*] where the Deity had appeared; the patriarchs observed this custom, see Gen. xii. 7, xxvi. 25, xxxv. 1. The altar with its name *Jehovah is peace*, i.e. *well-disposed*, commemorated the revelation; cf. the naming of an altar in Gen. xxxiii. 20, xxxv. 7, Ex. xvii. 15 (all E). For Kittel's interpretation of the episode see on xiii. 19. Perhaps Gideon's experience conveyed to his mind a new religious idea. According to primitive belief, the Deity dwelt in a sacred tree or stone; but not in the terebinth or rock at Ophrah; the Messenger of Jehovah has no such dwelling; He comes as a traveller from some region that no one knows. Whether the burning of the sacrifice marked a change in religious practice is more doubtful.

The foregoing narrative presents several difficulties. The inconsistent use of *Jehovah* in *vv.* 14, 16 may be accounted for by a lapse from strict dramatic fitness on the part of the writer; but the expressions in *vv.* 14, 16, 17 which imply that Gideon recognized the Angel before *v.* 22, cannot perhaps be explained in this way. It has been suggested (1) that these expressions have been inserted by a later editor to emphasize from the first the divine nature of Gideon's Visitor and the sacrificial character of the meal; or (2) that the confusion is due to a double version, 14b *do not I send thee*, 16, 17b being assigned to E, the rest belonging to J. But the distinction between the sources cannot be made out with much success. It is possible to explain the difficulty in 17b in the way attempted in the note; but we must allow that the present form of the narrative cannot be original.

25—32. *Gideon overthrows the altar of Baal and receives the name Jerub-baal.* This story has no connexion with the preceding narrative 11—24; for after Gideon had built the altar Jehovah-shalom (24), it is not likely that he would have been told to build another altar at once and in the same place (26). So far as any antecedents of the story exist

And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said 25
unto him, Take thy father's bullock, [1]even the second bullock
of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that
thy father hath, and cut down the [2]Asherah that is [3]by it:
and build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of 26
this strong hold, [4]in the orderly manner, and take the second
bullock, and offer a burnt offering with the wood of the

[1] Or, *and*
[2] See Ex. xxxiv. 13.
[3] Or, *upon*
[4] Or, *with that pertaining to it*

they are to be found in *vv.* 7—10, which denounce the worship of Canaanite ('Amorite') gods.

25. *the same night*] Not the night after the events related in 11—24, for the reasons just given. Moore suggests the night after the prophet delivered his message, 7—10. It is safer to say that the original connexion is lost.

thy father's bullock **and** *the second bullock of seven years old*] The text is unintelligible and corrupt. The 'bullock' (lit. 'the steer of the ox') and 'the second bullock' are probably doublets; 'the second bullock' in *vv.* 26 and 28 must be derived from the corrupt form here. The LXX., cod. A and Luc., reads 'the fatted calf' instead of 'the steer of the ox'; but no satisfactory emendation has been proposed. Probably the text originally contained a direction to take a young bullock for the purpose of a sacrifice.

the altar of Baal that thy father hath] To mark the resemblance to the previous clause, render **thy father's altar of Baal**: this means that Joash was not merely the custodian but the proprietor of the altar, contrast *v.* 11. But the altar appears to belong to the village; the inhabitants are furious when they find it destroyed. Hence *thy father's* (lit. 'which belongs to thy father') is probably a corrupt repetition of the same words in the sentence before. So Lagrange.

the Asherah that is by it] The sacred pole which stood beside the altar of Baal; see on iii. 7.

26. *build an altar unto the LORD*] The present narrative tells another story about Gideon independently of what has gone before, *v.* 24.

this strong hold] Strictly 'place of refuge'; but sometimes, as here and in Is. xvii. 9, 10, the idea of strength is added. For Jehovah's altar a new site is to be chosen.

in the orderly manner] The cognate verb is used in Num. xxiii. 4 of *arranging* altars, and elsewhere of *arranging in order* offerings or wood for sacrifice. The noun generally means *a row* or *rank*, esp. the *ranks* of an army, e.g. 1 Sam. iv. 2, 12 ('army,' marg. 'array'); hence it may denote here *the row* or *course* of stones built into the altar. But the exact sense of the word is uncertain. The marg. may be ignored.

the second bullock] Probably *the second* has been introduced here and in *v.* 28 for the sake of verbal harmony with *v.* 25, where, however, the text is corrupt.

27 Asherah which thou shalt cut down. Then Gideon took ten
men of his servants, and did as the LORD had spoken unto
him: and it came to pass, because he feared his father's
household and the men of the city, so that he could not do
28 it by day, that he did it by night. And when the men of
the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal
was broken down, and the Asherah was cut down that was
[1]by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar
29 that was built. And they said one to another, Who hath
done this thing? And when they inquired and asked, they
30 said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing. Then
the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that
he may die: because he hath broken down the altar of Baal,
and because he hath cut down the Asherah that was [1]by it.
31 And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead
for Baal? or will ye save him? he that will plead for him,
[2]let him be put to death [3]whilst *it is yet* morning: if he be a
god, let him plead for himself, because one hath broken down
32 his altar. Therefore on that day he called him [4]Jerubbaal,
saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath broken
down his altar.

[1] Or, *upon*
[2] Or, *shall be put to death:* let be *till morning; if &c.*
[3] Or, *before morning* [4] That is, *Let Baal plead.*

27. *ten men of his servants*] Clearly Gideon and his family held a position of consequence in the village.

30. *Bring out thy son*] If the father gave up his son there would be no blood-feud.

31. *Will ye plead for Baal?*] Cf. Job xiii. 8. The pron. is emphatic: 'Will *ye* contend for Baal? will *ye* save him?' The next sentence, 'whoever takes up arms for the false god shall be put to death forthwith,' interrupts the argument, and introduces an idea foreign to the context; the words appear to have been inserted to make it plain that Joash did think Baal to be no real divinity. 'Will *ye* contend for Baal? will *ye* save him? If he is a god let him contend for himself!' Moore appropriately quotes as an illustration the saying of Tiberius to the consuls, 'Deorum injuriae diis curae,' Tacitus, *Annal.* i. 73.

whilst it is yet *morning*] i.e. 'during the morning,' cf. iii. 26 'while they tarried,' lit. 'during their tarrying.' But this use of the prep. is rare; lit. the words = *until the morning*, and this is best taken to mean *by to-morrow morning*, cf. xvi. 2.

32. *on that day he called him Jerubbaal*] Or with a slight change,

Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the 33
children of the east assembled themselves together; and
they passed over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel.

he was called; in consequence of the foregoing episode the people give Gideon a new name. This is explained to mean 'Let Baal contend against him'; but the explanation will not hold good, for (*a*) if *Jerub-baal* is connected with the verb *rîb* 'contend,' which is questionable, the meaning must be 'Baal contends,' without any further thought of 'against him': (*b*) of course Baal did *not* contend against Gideon, the point of the story is Baal's impotence. The explanation given in the text rests, not upon a scientific etymology, but upon an assonance, as often elsewhere in the O.T. (e.g. Gen. iv. 1, Ex. ii. 10); *Jerub-baal* suggested the shrewd remark of Joash in *v.* 31, *let Baal contend*. Originally, no doubt, the name had quite another significance, and *baal*, i.e. 'lord,' referred to Jehovah. In early days *baal* could be used without offence in this way; thus we find such names as Ish-baal, Merib-baal, Baal-yada in the families of Saul and David, whose loyalty to Jehovah was above suspicion; one of David's heroes was even called Baal-jah. But the dangerous associations of the title led the prophets to discountenance this usage (see especially Hos. ii. 16), and it was given up; the names just mentioned were altered to Ish-bosheth ('shame'), Mephi-bosheth, El-yada[1]. Jerub-baal was allowed to stand, because the general drift of the present narrative (as distinct from the explanation given in this verse) suggested the interpretation 'Adversary of Baal,' cf. LXX. cod. A δικαστήριον τοῦ Βάαλ; nevertheless in 2 Sam. xi. 21 the name is changed to Jerub-besheth. If the name, then, originally had nothing to do with the Canaanite Baal, and therefore was not given to Gideon in consequence of the episode related here, we can only suppose that the story grew out of a fanciful etymology. For linguistic reasons many scholars consider that *Jerub-baal* is not connected with the verb *rîb* 'contend[2],' and that the proper spelling is Jeru-baal, i.e. 'Baal (Jehovah) founds,' like Jeru-el, Jeri-yahu; none of the forms in the LXX. have the doubled letter ('Αρβάαλ, 'Ιαρβάλ, 'Ιεροβάαλ, etc.).

33—40. *The Midianite invasion; the sign of the fleece.*

33. *Then all the Midianites...assembled themselves*] Better, *Now all the M....had assembled themselves*. This verse may be connected with *vv.* 7—10, 25—32; it prepares the way for the account of the battle in ch. vii. For *the Amalekites* etc. see on *v.* 3.

the valley of Jezreel] Josh. xvii. 16, Hos. i. 5; not the Great Plain west of Jezreel, but the broad, deep valley which descends eastwards from Jezreel down to the Jordan. It was not till after OT. times that the Great Plain was called the Plain of Esdraëlon (the Greek form of Jezreel),

[1] Cf. 1 Chr. ix. 39, 40, xiv. 7, xii. 5 with 2 Sam. ii. 8, iv. 4, v. 16.
[2] The imperfect of *rîb* is not *yārōb* (whence *jerub*) but *yārîb*; cf. the pr. name Jeho-yarib 1 Chr. xxiv. 7.

34 But the spirit of the LORD [1]came upon Gideon; and he blew
a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered together after him.
35 And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh; and they
also were gathered together after him: and he sent messengers
unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they
36 came up to meet them. And Gideon said unto God, If thou
37 wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast spoken, behold, I
will put a fleece of wool on the threshing-floor; if there be
dew on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the ground,
then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand,
38 as thou hast spoken. And it was so: for he rose up early

[1] Heb. *clothed itself with.*

Judith i. 8. The Midianites advanced from the E., *passed over* Jordan, and entered Palestine by the valley (Wādi Jālud) which leads up to Jezreel (Zer'īn).

34. *the spirit of the LORD came upon*] lit. 'put on as a garment,' i.e. *took possession of Gideon*; cf. 1 Chr. xii. 18, 2 Chr. xxiv. 20. The verb is used in Syriac with the same metaphorical sense; e.g. 'Ignatius, God-clad and martyr,' a frequent expression in the Syr. fragments of the Ignatian Epistles[1]. Cf. also Rom. xiii. 14. For *the spirit of the LORD* see on iii. 10.

blew a trumpet] Cf. iii. 27. Gideon's own clansmen respond to the call; they seem to be the 300 who follow him in viii. 4—21. This verse would form a suitable continuation of 11—24.

35. In vii. 23 these tribes, with the exception of Zebulun, gather together *after* the battle: here Gideon summons them *before*. It is difficult to reconcile the two statements. Some notice of a general muster is wanted to account for the large numbers with Gideon in vii. 2—8; probably this was the reason why the verse was inserted here.

to meet them] i.e. the Midianites; the previous verb means **they went up** for war, as in *v.* 3, i. 1, xii. 3 etc.

36—40. The divine impulse has seized Gideon, he has called out his men, he is ready to attack; but here he seems to be still at home, hesitating and waiting to be convinced. In order of time these verses are parallel, not subsequent, to 11—24; and indeed, after the revelation of the Angel, it is strange that Gideon should have demanded a second sign. Instead of 'Jehovah' and 'the Angel of Jehovah' the name 'Elohim' (God) is used here; the narrative from which these verses come was a work of the Elohist school; to the same narrative we may assign *vv.* 7—10, 25—32, 33, 35*a* (?) in this ch.

36. *as thou hast spoken*] The words are meant to refer to *vv.* 14—16.

37. *a fleece of wool on the threshing-floor*] We may think of Gideon

[1] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers* i. 184—190, iii. 100, 111.

on the morrow, and pressed the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowlful of water. And Gideon 39
said unto God, Let not thine anger be kindled against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And 40
God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that 7
were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the spring

sleeping out of doors on the airy threshing-floor near his home; it is a hot night in July, when the dews are heavy in Palestine; at any rate it is the harvest season, for the Midianites are in the land. Gideon has with him a fleece, perhaps his sheepskin cloak with the wool on it; he resolves to use it for the purposes of a 'sign.' No doubt he speaks with God in a dream.

39. *I will speak but this once*] recalls the language of Abraham in Gen. xviii. 32 J. The dew would naturally soak the fleece more than the rocky threshing-floor; so Gideon asks for a sign still more extraordinary.

Ch. vii. 1—8. *Gideon's army is reduced.*

It seems to have been a fixed element in the tradition that 300 was the number of Gideon's force (*vv.* 6—8, 16, 19—21, viii. 4); but vi. 35 has just declared that four tribes responded to his call; accordingly we are here told how this army of volunteers, numbering 32,000, was cut down to 300. The story, however, rests upon an insecure foundation, for *v.* 23 says that the tribes were gathered together after the battle, and not before it, as stated in vi. 35. Most critics consider that *vv.* 2—8a do not belong to either of the two main narratives, but there is no agreement as to the source from which they come. In *v.* 3 especially the allusion to Deut. xx. 8, and the incredibly large figures, betray a late origin; on the other hand, the test at the spring has the picturesque character of an ancient tradition. The whole passage has been much worked over by editorial hands.

1. This verse is the continuation of vi. 34; the thread of the narrative is taken up again in *v.* 8b. The intervening *vv.* 2—8a are dependent upon vi. 35.

who is Gideon] A gloss, as in viii. 35. The wording suggests that the earliest form of the narrative used the name *Jerub-baal*, for which *Gideon* has been substituted in almost every instance. In ch. ix., which is comparatively free from editorial changes, the name is always *Jerubbaal*.

of [1]Harod: and the camp of Midian was on the north side of them, [2]by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

2 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine 3 own hand hath saved me. Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and trembling, let him return and [3]depart from mount Gilead.

[1] That is, *Trembling*. See ver. 3.
[2] Or, *from the hill of Moreh* onwards *in the valley*
[3] Or, *go round about*

the spring of Harod] Traditionally identified with 'Ain Jālūd, about 1¾ miles E.S.E. of Zer'in (Jezreel). The spring issues from a cave at the foot of a hill which belongs to the Gilboa range, now called Jebel Fuḳū'a; a large shallow pool spreads out in front of the cave, and the water flows away in a small stream towards the east. Thus Gideon, posted on the hill of Gilboa, was able to command the valuable water-supply at the foot; the Midianite camp lay opposite to him in the valley below (*v.* 8b); the stream would afford an outer line of defence. See G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geogr.*, 397 ff. There are two other springs in the neighbourhood, but neither of them suits the requirements so well as 'Ain Jālūd; the identification, however, cannot be called certain.

by the hill of Moreh] The marg. is more accurate, *from the hill of Moreh* onwards *in the valley*; the prep. *from* is awkward and obscures the sense. A slight correction (*beth* for *min*) clears the situation; **on the hill of Moreh in the valley.** Other corrections are: 'was below him, on the north of the hill of M.' (Budde); 'was on the north of the hill of M.' (Moore). *The hill of Moreh* was probably the hill of *Shunem*, the 'Little Hermon' of St Jerome, now called Nebī Dạḥī; it was here that the Philistines took up their position before the fatal battle of Gilboa (1 Sam. xxviii. 4). *The hill of the mōreh* means *the hill of the teacher*; it was the seat of a holy place where divine teaching was given. En-dor (now 'En-dūr), the home of the woman that had a familiar spirit, lay on the northern spur of the hill; cf. Ps. lxxxiii. 10.

in the valley] i.e. the valley of Jezreel, vi. 33.

2. *The people that are with thee*] Whatever is to be understood by these words in *v.* 1, here they must refer to the host mentioned in vi. 35.

lest Israel vaunt themselves against me] For the thought cf. Deut. viii. 11—17, ix. 4f.; the same word *vaunt* occurs in Is. x. 15. The army is to be reduced in order that Jehovah's intervention on behalf of Israel may be the more striking and all the glory His; cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 6, Ps. xliv. 3, 1 Cor. i. 25—27.

3. *trembling*] Hebr. *hārēd*, with pointed reference to the name of the spring *Ḥărōd*. The sentence 'whosoever is fearful...let him return' closely resembles Deut. xx. 8, and may allude to the ordinance there laid down.

And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

4 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. 5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. 6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. 7 And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save

and depart from mount Gilead] The verb (*ṣafar*) occurs only here, and its meaning must be guessed from the context; the renderings 'depart early' (AV. following Kimchi, from Aram. *ṣafra* 'morning'), or 'go round,' or 'spring away from' (Arab. *ḍafara* 'leap') are impossible or very doubtful. Moore's emendation 'And Gideon tried (*ṣaraf*) them' is adopted by many, but the 'testing,' appropriate in *v.* 4, is not suitable here. *Mount Gilead* is probably a mistake for *mount Gilboa*, for Gilead was a district on the east of the Jordan.

4. *I will try them*] So elsewhere of Jehovah's *testing* the people, Jer. ix. 7, Is. xlviii. 10, Ps. lxvi. 10, a figurative expression taken from the *smelting* of metals to get rid of impure properties.

5. At the end of the verse LXX. cod. A and Luc. adds 'him shalt thou set by himself,' completing the parallel with the foregoing sentence. The words have probably fallen out by accident.

6. *putting their hand to their mouth*] These words do not agree with *v.* 5, where 'lappeth' is explained 'with his tongue, as a dog lappeth'; they belong to those who 'bowed down upon their knees to drink water,' and should be transferred to the end of the verse. LXX. cod. A and Luc. after 'lapped' reads *with their tongue*, and leaves out 'to their mouth.'

It is difficult to see the point of the test. Was it that the majority who knelt down to drink shewed that they were thinking only of their thirst, heedless of the risk of being taken by surprise; while 'the three hundred' were able, while they lapped, to keep their faces towards the enemy and their hands upon their weapons? 'The test in fact was a test of attitude, which, after all, both in physical and moral warfare, has proved of far greater value than strength or skill,' G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geogr.*, p. 399; perhaps this is as much as we can say.

you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all
8 the people go every man unto his place. [1]So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the men of Israel every man unto his tent, but retained the three hundred men: and the camp of Midian was beneath him in the valley.
9 And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down [2]into the camp; for I have
10 delivered it into thine hand. But if thou fear to go down,
11 go thou with Purah thy servant down to the camp: and thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down [2]into the camp. Then went he

[1] According to some ancient versions, *So they took the victuals of the people.*
[2] Or, *against*

8. *So the people took victuals in their hand*] Not a strict transl. of the original, which must mean *So they took the provisions of the people in their hand* (LXX., marg.), though the text requires correction to yield this meaning. But is it likely that Gideon would burden his 300 men with the provisions of 10,000 (*v.* 3)? Moore, followed by Budde, Nowack, Lagrange, conjectures *so he took the pitchers of the people from their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent*, in preparation for *vv.* 16 ff. This gives an excellent sense, and removes the harshness of the change of subjects (*they took...he sent*).

every man unto his tent] A conventional expression surviving from the days when the Israelites were nomads; cf. 1 Sam. xiii. 2, 1 Kings xii. 16, etc.

and the camp of Midian] Continuation of *v.* 1.

9—15. *Gideon visits the Midianite camp.*

9. *the same night*] Probably the night of the day which began in *v.* 1.

get thee down] Here and in *v.* 11 a **against** *the camp*, to attack it; in *v.* 10 *unto the camp*, to visit it.

10. *thy servant*] A warrior of rank had an attendant who acted as armour-bearer, cf. ix. 54, 1 Sam. xiv. 1, 6. With a companion danger is more easily faced; cf. the words of Diomedes when he offers to explore the Trojan camp:

ἀλλ' εἴ τίς μοι ἀνὴρ ἅμ' ἕποιτο καὶ ἄλλος,
Μᾶλλον θαλπωρὴ, καὶ θαρσαλεώτερον ἔσται. *Iliad* X. 222 f.

11. *shall thine hands be strengthened*] for a bold stroke. Hebrew speaks of the hands where we should speak of the heart; cf. 2 Sam. ii. 7, xvi. 21.

down with Purah his servant unto the outermost part of the armed men that were in the camp. And the Midianites and 12
the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like locusts for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand which is upon the sea shore for multitude. And when Gideon was come, behold, there was 13
a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian, and came unto the tent, and smote it that it fell, and turned it upside down, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing 14
else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of

the armed men] Elsewhere of the Israelite hosts at the period of the Wandering and the Occupation; Ex. xiii. 18 E, Num. xxxii. 17 JE, Josh. i. 14, iv. 12 D; the exact meaning of the word is not known. The LXX. renders *fifty* by a mistaken etymology.

12. *and the Amalekites* etc.] See on vi. 3, and cf. vi. 5.

lay along] **lay settled**, like locusts: the vast numbers explain both Gideon's fear and the ease with which he escaped observation. But the verse is made up of standing expressions, and may be an editorial insertion; it rather interrupts the connexion between *vv.* 11 and 13.

13. *Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo*] The phraseology recalls Gen. xxxvii. 6 f., xl. 9 E. No doubt the two Midianites were lying in their tent: Gideon could listen without being seen.

a cake of barley bread] The word rendered *cake* occurs only here, and is of doubtful meaning; the context suggests a flat circular cake. Barley bread, the coarse food of the poor, was a symbol of the peasantry; the tent a symbol of the nomad.

tumbled] This same form of the verb is used of the flaming sword which *turned in every direction*, Gen. iii. 24. So the cake turned over and over, this way and that, until it smote *the tent* which the man saw in his dream, not *the* tent, i.e. of the king, as Josephus takes it, misunderstanding the idiomatic use of the article; *Ant.* v. 6, 4.

and *it fell*] The words are out of place; the text as it stands makes the tent fall, then be turned upside down, and then fall. At the end of the verse, *that* the tent *lay along* ought probably to be rendered *and* the tent *remained fallen*. Perhaps some reader wrote the normal form *and it fell* in the margin, whence it crept into the text after *and smote it*.

14. *of Gideon the son of Joash*] The phrase which follows means **the men of Israel**, as in *vv.* 8, 23, viii. 22, ix. 55, xx. 20, the sing. being used in a collective sense; and this rendering agrees with the symbol of the barley cake, which suggests the peasantry in general, not any particular individual. If, in accordance with usage, we translate *the men of Israel*, then it seems likely that the names of Gideon and his father were inserted to make the application more distinct. Some

Israel: into his hand God hath delivered Midian, and all the host.

15 And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped; and he returned into the camp of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

16 And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put into the hands of all of them trumpets, and empty

17 pitchers, with torches within the pitchers. And he said unto

scholars would include *the sword* among the inserted words (cf. *v.* 20), but this is hardly necessary.

into **their** *hand God hath delivered*] A foreigner uses the name *Elohim*: *Jehovah* is for Israelites; cf. iii. 20.

16—22. *The night attack.*

The account of Gideon's bold and successful stratagem is perfectly intelligible as a whole, though there is some confusion in the details, chiefly due to the repetitions in *v.* 17 (Gideon's order), *v.* 20 (the blowing of the trumpets), *v.* 22 (the direction of the flight). It is usually objected that one pair of hands (*v.* 16) could not have carried a trumpet and a pitcher with a lighted (?) torch inside; the objection is rather prosaic; such a difficulty would not, perhaps, have occurred to an ancient writer. But the fact remains that the text in *vv.* 17, 20, 22 is clearly not in its original form; are we to explain the overloading as the work of subsequent editors, or as an attempt to combine two different narratives of the same event? The latter explanation is adopted by most recent commentators; it is supposed that in one narrative the trumpets played a leading part, in the other, the pitchers and torches. At any rate the trumpets cannot have been introduced by a later hand, for they form a prominent feature of the story; so perhaps we can only suppose that here, as elsewhere in the history of Gideon (cf. vi. 11—24 and 25—32; vi. 35 and vii. 23), two versions have been harmonized with more or less success. But to separate them is difficult; none of the attempts at an analysis can be called satisfactory. The problem remains in much uncertainty.

16. *divided...into three companies*] Cf. ix. 43 ff., 1 Sam. xi. 11, xiii. 17 f., Job i. 17 for similar tactics. Gideon had to make up by wit and daring what he lacked in numbers.

trumpets] Hebr. *shōphār*, the curved *horn* of a cow or ram, used to give signals in war (iii. 27, 2 Sam. ii. 28, etc.); to be distinguished from the long metal *haṣōṣĕrāh*, the *trumpet* proper, which was used for religious purposes (2 Kings xii. 13, 1 Chr. xiii. 8, etc.); see the illustrations in Driver's *Joel and Amos*, p. 145. As a sacred instrument the *shophar* is mentioned chiefly by later writers, Lev. xxv. 9, 2 Chr. xv. 14; cf. the *rams' horns* Josh. vi. 4 ff. (E). The horns were put into the hands, not hung on the shoulders, of Gideon's men.

them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outermost part of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow the trumpet, I and all that are with 18
me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, For the LORD and for Gideon.

So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came 19
unto the outermost part of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch, when they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake in pieces the pitchers that were in their hands. And the three companies blew the 20
trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the torches in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, [1]The sword of the LORD and of Gideon. And they stood every man in his place round about 21
the camp: and all the host ran; and they shouted, and [2]put

[1] Or, *A sword for &c.* [2] Another reading is, *fled.*

torches within the pitchers] The word generally, but not always (xv. 4 f.), implies a lighted torch. If the torches were alight the pitchers were used to conceal them. The pitcher was a large earthenware vessel, cf. Gen. xxiv. 14 ff., 1 Kings xvii. 12 ff. ('barrel').

17. *it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do*] This repetition of the first half of the verse is perhaps due to an attempt to harmonize a double narrative. Omit the words and the connexion with *v.* 18 is improved: 'when I come...and blow the trumpet (18)...then blow ye.'

19. *the middle watch*] The night was therefore divided into three watches: cf. 'the morning watch' Ex. xiv. 24, 1 Sam. xi. 11. The beginning of the middle watch would be about midnight. In later times the Jews adopted the Roman custom of dividing the night into four watches, St Mk. xiii. 35, St Mt. xiv. 25, St Lk. xii. 38.

20. Gideon's company having given the signal (*v.* 19), the two others reply, and all three together (*v.* 20) carry out the preconcerted plan.

The sentence 'and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal' seems to be, either in whole or in part, an addition, possibly from the 'trumpet-story'; but the original form of the verse is past recovery.

The sword etc.] **A sword for Jehovah and Gideon!** The battle-cry as agreed was simply 'For Jehovah and Gideon,' *v.* 18; *a sword* has been added.

21. The three bands of Israelites stood still while the Midianites were thrown into a panic by the startling noises and the sudden lights.

ran] The expression is somewhat weak. A slight correction, proposed by Moore and generally accepted, greatly improves the narrative, **woke up.**

22 *them* to flight. And they blew the three hundred trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, and against all the host: and the host fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the [1]border of Abel-meholah, by
23 Tabbath. And the men of Israel were gathered together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh,
24 and pursued after Midian. And Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, Come down against Midian, and take before them the waters, as

[1] Heb. *lip*.

and they shouted, and **fled**] So Verss.; the subject of both verbs is *the host*. *They shouted* means *sounded the alarm*; see Hos. v. 8, Joel ii. 1, cf. Is. xv. 4.

22. The Midianites, roused suddenly from sleep, gave the alarm and tried to fly (21); now, believing themselves to be completely surrounded, and cumbered by their tents and cattle, they turn their swords against one another (cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 20, 2 Kings iii. 23), and the flight becomes general. For *and against all the host* read **in all the host**, LXX., Pesh.

The Midianites no doubt fled down the valley eastwards, and made for the Jordan fords, but the places named as marking the course of the flight cannot be identified with certainty. The accumulation of names (note the double *as far as*) is perhaps due to the fusion of two narratives. Beth-shittah ('house of the acacia') has been identified with the present Shiṭṭāh, 6 m. E. of Zer'īn (Jezreel), but this is too near the site of the camp. Zerērah is perhaps to be read Zerēdah (with many MSS.) 1 Kings xi. 26, which is generally identified with Zarĕthan, 2 Chr. iv. 17 compared with 1 Kings vii. 46; this will bring the place considerably to the south, near to Adam (Josh. iii. 16)=the ford Dāmiyeh. But the identification is not certain, for in 1 Kings iv. 12 Zarĕthan is beside Beth-shean, the modern Bēsān, and below Jezreel; the two names are perhaps confused, possibly the northern was Zerēdah, the southern Zarĕthan. Abel-meholah (1 Kings iv. 12, xix. 16) is identified by Eusebius, *Onom. Sacr.*, 227, 35 with Bethmaiĕla, a village in the Jordan valley, 10 Roman miles from Scythopolis (=Beth-shean). The *lip* of Abel-meholah (see marg.) was no doubt the cliff where the valley ended in a steep descent to the river. Tabbath is quite unknown.

23—25. *The pursuit.*

23. *out of Naphtali* etc.] The same tribes, with the addition of Zebulun, were summoned before the battle, vi. 35; they must have formed the bulk of the host dismissed in *vv.* 3—8. They returned to their homes; but now hearing of Midian's disaster, they assemble again, this time independently of Gideon, and pursue the enemy. Such must be the general sense intended by this verse, which, however, can hardly have belonged to the narrative originally.

far as Beth-barah, [1]even Jordan. So all the men of Ephraim were gathered together, and took the waters as far as Beth-barah, [1]even Jordan. And they took the two princes of 25
Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; and they slew Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the winepress of Zeeb, and pursued Midian: and they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon beyond Jordan.

[1] Or, *and also*

24. Gideon sends a message (cf. vi. 35) to the Ephraimites in the country S. of the battlefield, urging them to seize the fords, and so **to meet** *the Midianites* as they come flying down the Jordan valley. Cf. iii. 27 f., xii. 5 f.

the waters, as far as Beth-barah, **and also** *Jordan* (marg.)] As the text stands, *the waters* are distinguished from *Jordan*; hence Moore suggests that *the waters* refer to the Wadi Fār'a, a perennial stream which empties itself into the Jordan near the ford of Dāmiyeh; but the stream is not large enough to offer any serious obstacle, it would not be worth holding: *the waters* most naturally mean those of the Jordan; *and also Jordan* will then be either a gloss added to explain *the waters*, or a mistake for *upon the Jordan*, as the Pesh. reads; 'upon'='on the bank of,' as in v. 19, Num. xxii. 5, Deut. iii. 12, etc. *Beth-barah* has not been discovered; the context implies that it lay S. of the Ephraimite country near the Jordan. The Verss. give the pronunciation Beth-bērah, as if meaning 'house of the well.'

25. *Oreb and Zeeb*] The Midianite princes bear Hebrew (or Hebraized) names='Raven' and 'Wolf.' The sheikh of the powerful tribe of the Banū 'Adwān, who range the country S.E. of the Jordan, still receives the hereditary title of Dhi'āb, i.e. Zeeb. Animal names of this kind were borne both by clans and individuals, more frequently by the former, as the O.T. shews; they may be explained as survivals from a totem stage of society. See Gray, *Hebr. Pr. Names*, 112—114. Instead of the two princes Oreb and Zeeb, the other narrative, viii. 4—21, mentions the two kings Zebah and Zalmunna. Cf. Ps. lxxxiii. 11.

the rock of Oreb...the winepress of Zeeb] It is implied that the spots were named after the chiefs who fell there. Possibly the names of two conical hills N. and N.W. of Jericho, 'Uššˇ el ghurāb ('raven's nest') Ṭuwēl edh-dhi'āb ('ridge of the wolf'), have preserved a memory of the event; Buhl, *Geogr.*, p. 115. Isaiah x. 26 interprets this episode in a wider sense; cf. also Is. ix. 4.

and pursued Midian...beyond Jordan] The present narrative, vii. 22—viii. 3, tells how Gideon chased the Midianites down to the Jordan fords and into the arms of the Ephraimites, who brought to him the heads of the two chieftains. Nothing is said of Gideon having crossed the Jordan. These words were probably added by a later editor who wished to bring vii. 22—viii. 3 into harmony with viii. 4 ff.

8 And the men of Ephraim said unto him, Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with Midian? And they did chide with him sharply.
2 And he said unto them, What have I now done in comparison of you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better
3 than the vintage of Abiezer? God hath delivered into your hand the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their [1]anger was
4 abated toward him, when he had said that. And Gideon

[1] Heb. *spirit.*

Ch. **viii. 1—3.** *Gideon appeases the men of Ephraim.*

1. *the men of Ephraim...did chide with him sharply*] A similar outburst of jealousy is recorded in xii. 1 f., and in much the same language; but it need not follow that the one passage is merely a reproduction of the other; probably there were plenty of tales about the notorious temper of the great tribe. Thus early in the history Ephraim begins to assert itself. The want of unity among the tribes at this period is evident.

2. Gideon, like his father (vi. 31), had the ready wit to extricate himself from an awkward situation. For *the gleaning of the grapes* see Is. xvii. 6, Mic. vii. 1; the word is used of fruit, not of corn. Ephraim indeed arrived late upon the scene, but they had the glory of capturing the chiefs. Gideon speaks only of Abiezer, his own clansmen; the 300 warriors chosen from different tribes, vii. 2—8, belong to another version of the story. Probably *v.* 3 was followed by *v.* 29 in the original narrative.

4—21. *The pursuit on the east of Jordan.*

This section is clearly not the continuation of the verses which immediately precede (see p. 68); if its antecedents are to be found in the foregoing narrative at all, we may suppose that after the panic and flight described in vii. 16—22, the main body of the Midianites escaped across the Jordan, and with their camels (*vv.* 21, 26) easily outstripped their pursuers, insomuch that the men of Succoth and Penuel (*vv.* 6, 8), and they themselves (*v.* 11), believed that they were safely out of Gideon's reach. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the section itself presupposes a raid into Gideon's own district, where his brothers were murdered (*v.* 18), rather than the panic and flight described in vii. 16—22; possibly, therefore, we have here a fragment from some independent source. In *v.* 10 b there seems to be an attempt made to harmonize the narrative with what has gone before.

4. and *passed over*] To obtain this sense the text, which lit. =*passing over*, must be altered; the marg. may be disregarded.

came to Jordan, [1]*and* passed over, he, and the three hundred men that were with him, faint, yet pursuing. And he said 5
unto the men of Succoth, Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto the people that follow me; for they be faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian. And the princes of Succoth said, Are the hands of Zebah 6
and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thine army? And Gideon said, Therefore when the 7
LORD hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, then I will [2]tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness

[1] Or, *to pass* [2] Heb. *thresh.*

the three hundred] So in the other document vii. 2—8; the number was evidently a fixed element in the tradition.

faint **and** *pursuing*] LXX. A and Luc. *faint and hungry*, perhaps a correction in view of the demand for bread in *v.* 5.

5. *Succoth*] On the E. of Jordan, in the territory of Gad (Josh. xiii. 27), near Penuel (cf. Gen. xxxiii. 17), and below it (*went up v.* 8); and Penuel, as we learn from Gen. xxxii. 22, 30 f., lay not far from the ford of Jabbok (Nahr ez-Zerḳā). The question is, were Succoth and Penuel north or south of the Jabbok? On the whole, a position S. of the river satisfies the conditions of the narratives: Penuel near the point where the road coming E. from es-Salṭ crosses the road which comes down the Jordan valley from the north (the Ghōr route), i.e. 3 miles due E. of the ford ed-Dāmiyeh; and Succoth to the W. of Penuel, and lower down in the Jordan valley, cf. Ps. lx. 6. See Driver, *Expos. Times* xiii. 457 ff., *Genesis*, 300 ff. In the Jerus. Talmud Succoth is identified with Tar'ēla (now Deir 'Allā), N. of the Jabbok (*Shebi'ith* ix. 38 d); the identification probably rests only on a guess.

Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian] Contrast vii. 25, and cf. Ps. lxxxiii. 11. The Hebr. pronunciation of these Midianite names is intended to convey a contemptuous meaning, 'Sacrifice,' 'Shadow (i.e. protection, Num. xiv. 9) withheld,' which of course was not the real one. Zalmunna, strictly perhaps Ṣalm-na', appears to contain the name of the god Ṣalm, who is mentioned in the Aramaic inscriptions (fifth century B.C.) from Tēma in N. Arabia; in Assyrian also Ṣalmu, i.e. 'the dark' (a name of the planet Saturn) or 'the image,' seems to be used of a divinity[1].

6. *the princes of Succoth*] i.e. the executive officials of the community, responsible for its government, e.g. ix. 30 ('ruler,' lit. 'prince'), or for the conduct of its wars, e.g. vii. 25, viii. 3. See further on *v.* 14.

7. *I will tear*] **thresh** as marg. In the East threshing is done by *treading* (e.g. Is. xxviii. 28), which is what the verb here means; Gideon promises to trample their flesh **together with** *thorns of the desert and briers*, i.e. to lay them naked on a bed of thorns and tread

[1] See *NSI.*, p. 196 f.; *KAT.*[3], p. 475 f.

8 and with briers. And he went up thence to Penuel, and spake unto them in like manner: and the men of Penuel
9 answered him as the men of Succoth had answered. And he spake also unto the men of Penuel, saying, When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower.
10 Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor, and their hosts with them, about fifteen thousand men, all that were left of all the host of the children of the east: for there fell an
11 hundred and twenty thousand men that drew sword. And Gideon went up by the way of them that dwelt in tents on the east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and smote the host; for the

them down; so Targ. But the text reads awkwardly; for *together with* the LXX. has a different preposition, *with* as in *v.* 16 ('with them'); this somewhat alters the meaning of Gideon's threat, see on *v.* 16. The word rendered *briers* (so Verss.) occurs only here, and its exact sense is unknown; a plant like the *teasel* may be intended. Thorny bushes abound in the sub-tropical Ghōr where Succoth lay.

8. *Penuel*] See on *v.* 5. A place of some importance, for it was fortified by Jeroboam, 1 Kings xii. 25; its *tower* may have commanded the Jabbok ford. An explanation of the name is given in Gen. xxxii. 30. A different explanation is suggested by the name of the promontory S. of Tripolis, on the Syrian coast, which Strabo (p. 642 ed. Müller) calls Θεοῦ πρόσωπον 'face of God'; some cliff or boulder near the spot looked like a huge face.

When I come again in peace] A similar threat of retaliation for an insult is still used by the Arabs in the same district: 'By God, when I come again in peace, nowhere but in the breast!' Schumacher, *Mittheil. u. Nachr. D.P.V.* 1904, 76.

10. *Karkor*] Site unknown, probably near the edge of the Syrian desert.

all that were left...drew sword] These words have the appearance of an attempt to bring the present narrative into harmony with the account of the panic and flight in vii. 22—25. The exaggerated numbers recall those of Num. xxxi. (overthrow of Midian); *that drew sword* is an expression which often goes with large figures, e.g. xx. 2, 15, 17, 46; 2 Sam xxiv. 9 etc.

11. Describes Gideon's route going E. from Penuel. *by the way of them that dwelt in tents* is a doubtful rendering of a doubtful text. With slight corrections we may transl. *towards the way of the tent-dwellers*, i.e. the Bedouin route, such, for instance, as the present Haj road from Damascus to Mecca. The Targ. paraphrases, 'by the way to the camp of the Arabs who encamp in tents in the desert east of Nobah.' Strictly *by the way of* ought to be *by the way to* a place; hence Moore supposes that *the tent-dwellers* is a corruption of some place-name.

Nobah] has been identified, on the strength of Num. xxxii. 42

host was secure. And Zebah and Zalmunna fled; and he 12
pursued after them; and he took the two kings of Midian,
Zebah and Zalmunna, and [1]discomfited all the host. And 13
Gideon the son of Joash returned from the battle from the
ascent of Heres. And he caught a young man of the men 14
of Succoth, and inquired of him: and he [2]described for him
the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, seventy and
seven men. And he came unto the men of Succoth, and 15
said, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, concerning whom ye did
taunt me, saying, Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna
now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thy men
that are weary? And he took the elders of the city, and 16
thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he [3]taught
the men of Succoth. And he brake down the tower of Penuel, 17

[1] Heb. *terrified.* [2] Or, *wrote down*
[3] Some ancient authorities read, *threshed.* See ver. 7.

(Nobah = Kenath), with Ḳanawāt on the west of the Ḥaurān mountains; but this is much too far north. *Jogbehah* (belonging to Gad, Num. xxxii. 35) has survived in the modern 'Ajbēhāt, a ruined site 6 m. N.N.W. of 'Ammān.

secure] Not expecting an attack; cf. xviii. 7; Gen. xxxiv. 25; Mic. ii. 8.

12. *discomfited*] Marg. **terrified**; the combination of careless security and terror occurs again in Ezek. xxx. 9. The LXX. A and Lucian suggests a stronger word, such as *destroyed*, cf. Jos., *Ant.* v. 6, 5; but it is hardly necessary to alter the text. The two kings were the first to fly; Gideon contented himself with capturing them, and letting the rest break away in panic. He did not kill the kings at once; he had promised to shew them to Succoth and Penuel.

13. *from the ascent of Heres*] So LXX. A and Luc., with a slight correction of the text; or *upwards to Heres*, with further corrections. The word Ḥeres = 'the sun' lends itself to various experiments, which are to be seen in the Versions. The general sense of the verse seems to be that Gideon returned from the battle by some different way.

14. *he described for him*] **he wrote down** (and gave) **unto him.** The knowledge of writing must have been widely spread even at this early period. Cf. the similar incidents in i. 24 f.; 1 Sam. xxx. 11—16.

the elders] Cf. *v.* 16; the leading inhabitants and representatives of a district or city, e.g. xi. 5—11; they constituted the local authority and transacted public business, e.g. 1 Kings xxi. 8, 11. *Elders* and *princes*—the latter perhaps the executive of the local authority—are mentioned together in 2 Kings x. 1; Ps. cv. 22; Ezr. x. 8, 14.

16. *and with them he taught*] Read, changing one letter, **threshed** as in *v.* 7, with LXX. B ἠλόησεν, A κατέξανεν. The Vulg. gives a

18 and slew the men of the city. Then said he unto Zebah
and Zalmunna, What manner of men were they whom ye
slew at Tabor? And they answered, As thou art, so were
19 they; each one resembled the children of a king. And he
said, They were my brethren, the sons of my mother: as the
LORD liveth, if ye had saved them alive, I would not slay
20 you. And he said unto Jether his firstborn, Up, and slay
them. But the youth drew not his sword: for he feared,
21 because he was yet a youth. Then Zebah and Zalmunna
said, Rise thou, and fall upon us: for as the man is, so is
his strength. And Gideon arose, and slew Zebah and Zal-
munna, and took the crescents that were on their camels'
necks.

double rendering: et contrivit cum eis, atque comminuit viros Soccoth. Pesh. and Targ. paraphrase. The meaning seems to be that Gideon dragged thorns and teasels over their prostrate bodies, i.e. carded them; a form of torture well known in antiquity. For 'threshing' in this metaphorical sense cf. Am. i. 3, Mic. iv. 13, Is. xli. 15.

17. Gideon's revenge strikes us as vindictive. In return for some jeering words he treated these towns, which no doubt contained many of his own countrymen, with a barbarity which is altogether absent from his execution of the Midianite kings, who had murdered his brothers and plundered his home. We must allow for the rough and passionate temper of the age, and for the exasperating lack of patriotism in the two towns; cf. v. 23.

18. *at Tabor*] Mt Tabor is too far north if, as seems probable, Gideon's clan was settled near Shechem; see on vi. 11. There may have been another Tabor near Ophrah.

As thou art, so were they] powerful men, cf. vi. 12. The chiefs do not hesitate to boast of victims so distinguished.

19. *the sons of my mother*] and not only of the same father; they were therefore specially dear, cf. Gen. xliii. 29. On Gideon as next of kin fell the duty of avenging his brothers' blood; cf. 2 Sam. iii. 27, 30, xiv. 7, xxi. 5, 6. The execution was a judicial act, even an act of religious obligation.

20. *Jether his firstborn*] Did Gideon wish to bestow an honour upon his son, and humiliate these famous warriors? Or was the youth chosen for ceremonial reasons? Robertson Smith compares the choice of young men as sacrificers in Ex. xxiv. 5, and illustrates from the custom of the Saracens who charged lads with the slaying of their captives; *Rel. of Semites*, p. 396 *n.*

21. The chiefs reply with undaunted spirit like true sons of the desert: *as the man is, so is his strength*, i.e. a man has a man's strength (Moore); but the word *so* is not expressed in the terse Hebrew.

crescents] lit. *moons*, metal ornaments worn not only by the kings but

Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over 22
us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou
hast saved us out of the hand of Midian. And Gideon said 23
unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son
rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you. And Gideon 24
said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye
would give me every man the [1]earrings of his spoil. (For
they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)

[1] Or, *nose-rings*

by their camels, *v.* 26, and by the women of Jerusalem, Is. iii. 18. The name is not Israelite, nor is it the ordinary word for 'moon'; it is related to the old Aramaic name of the moon-god (*sahar*).

22—28. *Gideon refuses the kingship: he sets up an ephod: conclusion.*

22. *the men of Israel*] Not the 300 of *vv.* 4—21, but the men who formed the army vii. 14, ix. 55, the Israelites drawn from Ephraim, Manasseh, and the neighbouring tribes vii. 23. Thus *vv.* 22, 23 are probably not the sequel of 4—21, nor of 1—3, for the Ephraimites shewed anything but a disposition to make Gideon king; so these verses appear to come from a source secondary to the two main documents (see p. 69). The offer of the kingship shews that Gideon's exploit was more than the avenging of a private wrong (4—21); he had saved his countrymen; as king it would be his duty to save them still.

23. *I will not rule over you*] But ch. ix. implies that Gideon did exercise some kind of supremacy, at any rate in his own district, and his sons claimed to inherit his position, ix. 2. These words, then, either mean that Gideon seized the power, but rejected the title, of king; or they represent the view, which apparently came to the front in the closing years of the Northern Kingdom, that earthly kingship was inconsistent with the sovereignty of Jehovah; cf. 1 Sam. viii. 7, x. 19, xii. 12, 17, 19 (E source), Hos. xiii. 10 f. The latter is the explanation most generally accepted.

24. The making of the ephod and the manner in which it is spoken of belong to an early stage of religious thought; *vv.* 24—27a may, therefore, belong to the early narrative *vv.* 4—21; they have been skilfully connected with *vv.* 22, 23. The request shewed Gideon's disinterestedness and piety. As chief he would have the right to choose some gift for himself before the spoil was divided among his followers; cf. v. 30, 1 Sam. xxx. 20. The custom prevailed in ancient Arabia; see Robertson Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*, p. 440.

earrings] So when worn by men, LXX. here, Gen. xxxv. 4, Job xlii. 11; but *nose-rings* when worn by women, Gen. xxiv. 47, Is. iii. 21. Pliny mentions the wearing of earrings by men in the East, *Hist. Nat.* xi. 50.

Ishmaelites] i.e. in a general sense, Bedouin. Strictly, according to

25 And they answered, We will willingly give them. And they
spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the ear-
26 rings of his spoil. And the weight of the golden earrings
that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred *shekels*
of gold; beside the crescents, and the pendants, and the
purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside
27 the chains that were about their camels' necks. And Gideon
made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah:

Gen. xxv. 2, Ishmael was the half-brother of Midian; cf. the interchange of the names in Gen. xxxvii. 25—36.

26. *And the weight* etc.] 1700 shekels of gold by the heavy standard = nearly 75 lbs. Troy = £3485, or by the light standard = nearly 37½ lbs. Troy = £742 10*s*. A single ring might weigh half a shekel, Gen. xxiv. 22.

beside the crescents...necks] The sentence interrupts the account of the ephod, and looks like a later addition. *Pendants* (Heb. *nᵉṭîfôth* from *naṭaf* 'to drop') were perhaps single beads or gems attached to the lobe of the ear, cf. Arab. *naṭafat* 'a small clear pearl'; the Verss. understood some kind of necklace, so AV. *collars*; some Jewish interpreters think of small boxes containing fragrant gum (*nāṭāf* 'stacte,' Ex. xxx. 34), hence AVm. *sweet jewels*. For *chains* render **necklaces**, Song iv. 9, Pr. i. 9, contrast the *crescents* in *v.* 21.

27. *made an ephod thereof*] i.e. out of a large amount of precious metal—the gold of the earrings 26 a, not of the ornaments in 26 b. Gideon dedicated his spoil to Jehovah, cf. 2 Sam. viii. 11, Mic. iv. 13, Moabite St. ll. 12 f., 17 f. (Mesha' dedicates his spoil from Israel to Kĕmōsh).

The ephod we find associated with terāphim in xvii. 5, xviii. 14 ff., Hos. iii. 4, and in connexion with the Urim and Thummim or sacred lots, 1 Sam. xiv. 18 cf. 41 LXX.; it was *carried*, not 'worn,' by the priest, 1 Sam. ii. 28, xiv. 3, 18 LXX. (see RVm., but render *carried*), xxii. 18 (omit *linen* with LXX. cod. B, and render *carry*), xxiii. 6, xxx. 7; we gather, therefore, that it was used in consulting Jehovah to obtain an oracle. But what the ephod was itself is not so clear. It may have been a rich vestment or embroidered loin-cloth, such as we see in Egyptian paintings, which the priest put on when he consulted Jehovah; this may explain the amount of gold which Gideon devoted to its making. In the sanctuary at Nob the ephod stood or hung near the wall, but free from it; and here Gideon *set* or *placed* his ephod in the sanctuary at Ophrah. The root apparently means 'to sheathe,' and a derivative is used in Is. xxx. 22 for '*the plating* of thy molten images of gold'; hence many suppose that it must have been an image, but it is very doubtful whether *the plating* of the image could come to mean the image itself. Different in some way from the oracular ephod was *the ephod of linen* with which Samuel and David were *girt* when performing religious functions: a *closely fitting* garment is what the meaning of the root

and all Israel went a whoring after it there: and it became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house. So Midian was 28
subdued before the children of Israel, and they lifted up their heads no more. And the land had rest forty years in the days of Gideon.

And Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and dwelt in his 29
own house. And Gideon had threescore and ten sons of 30
his body begotten: for he had many wives. And his con- 31
cubine that was in Shechem, she also bare him a son, and he [1]called his name Abimelech. And Gideon the son of 32

[1] Heb. *set.*

implies. A richer development of this was *the ephod* of the High-Priest described in Ex. xxviii. 6—12 P, shaped like a kind of waistcoat, over which he wore the jewelled pouch or breastplate containing the Urim and Thummim; in its latest development the ephod thus maintained its association with the divine oracle. See esp. Sellin, *Orient. Studien Theodor Nöldeke...gewidmet* 1906, ii. 701 f. and Benzinger, *Hebr. Arch.*[2], 347 f., 359; Driver, *Exodus*, p. 312.

went a whoring after it] Cf. *v.* 33 and ii. 17 *n.* In Gideon's day there was no wide-spread objection to an image in Jehovah's sanctuary; the prohibition in Ex. xx. 4, though it may have been laid down by Moses, was not observed by the people generally. A later age, however, trained in more spiritual conceptions, took offence at Gideon's action and saw in it the cause of the disaster which befell his family.

28. The Deuteronomic editor's conclusion of the story; cf. iii. 30 *n.* and iii. 11 *n.*

29. Originally this verse closed the narrative in *vv.* 1—3, or that in *vv.* 4—21. Verses 30—32 form an introduction to the story of Abimelech in ch. ix.; some such earlier mention of Abimelech is presupposed by ix. 1.

30. *of his body begotten*] Only again in Gen. xlvi. 26 ('which came out of his loins') and Ex. i. 5 P, cf. Gen. xxxv. 11 P. The more sons a man had, the greater his importance, cf. x. 4, xii. 9.

31. *his concubine that was in Shechem*] A connexion of this kind is illustrated by early Arabian custom: the woman, or 'female friend' (*ṣadāḳa*), did not leave her home, the union was of a temporary character (hence the term, *mot'a* marriage) and required no consent from parents or guardians, the children remained with their mother and belonged to her tribe; cf. ix. 1 and xiv. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in early Arabia*, p. 69 ff. The narrative seems to imply that the woman was a Canaanite.

and he called his name Abimelech] lit. *set*, an idiom found only in late writings 2 Kings xvii. 34, Neh. ix. 7, Dan. i. 7. *Abimelech* does not mean 'my father (Gideon) is king,' but probably 'Melech (i.e. the divine king) is father.' See Gray, *Hebr. Pr. Names*, pp. 75—86.

Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

33 And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring
34 after the Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god. And the children of Israel remembered not the LORD their God, who had delivered them out of the hand of all their enemies on
35 every side: neither shewed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, *who is* Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had shewed unto Israel.

32. *in a good old age*] Again in Gen. xv. 15 JE, xxv. 8 P, 1 Chr. xxix. 28.

Verses 33—35 originally followed *v.* 28, according to the usual scheme. These verses are made up of the customary phrases of the Dtc. editor, with the addition of particulars derived from ch. ix.; cf. ii. 14, 18 f., iii. 7, 12, iv. 1, vi. 9 and ix. 4, 16, 19. Most probably, then, these verses were intended to form not an introduction to ch. ix, but a substitute for it. Ch. ix. did not fit into RD's scheme, so he laid it aside, and wrote *vv.* 33—35 to take its place. A later editor, however, thought fit to incorporate the discarded chapter, and by way of an introduction he wrote *vv.* 30—32, which, as noticed above, contain several expressions found elsewhere in writings later than the Dtc. age. Budde was the first to propose this explanation, and it has been generally accepted; *Richt. u. Sam.* (1890), p. 119 ff.

33. *made Baal-berith their god*] Baal-bĕrîth (ix. 4, 46) was the Covenant-Baal, the god of the league between himself and his worshippers, or the god who presided over the league between the original Canaanite inhabitants of Shechem and the Israelite new-comers; see Gen. xxxiv. The Dtc. editor generalizes the worship of a half-Canaanite city into a defection of all Israel; similarly in *v.* 35 he blames Israelites for the ingratitude of the men of Shechem.

Ch. ix. *Abimelech's kingdom and fall.*

This chapter seems to be derived from a single source, with the exception, perhaps, of *vv.* 26—41, the account of Gaal's revolt, which Moore proposes to assign to J. There are no traces of the Deuteronomic editor here, for the reason suggested above. Historically the chapter possesses great value as illustrating the relations between Canaanites and Israelites in one of the chief towns of the country. Ch. i. made it clear that the Israelite conquest was very far from being complete. Here, at Shechem, the native Canaanites were in the ascendant, and yet there was a sufficiently strong Israelite element in the place to raise Abimelech to the position of ruler. But the time was not ripe for an Israelite monarchy; a reaction soon set in, and though the Canaanite revolt was unsuccessful it brought about Abimelech's fall and death.

And Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem 9
unto his mother's brethren, and spake with them, and with
all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying,
Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, 2
Whether is better for you, that all the sons of Jerubbaal,
which are threescore and ten persons, rule over you, or that
one rule over you? remember also that I am your bone and
your flesh. And his mother's brethren spake of him in the 3
ears of all the men of Shechem all these words: and their
hearts inclined to follow Abimelech; for they said, He is our
brother. And they gave him threescore and ten *pieces* of 4
silver out of the house of Baal-berith, wherewith Abimelech

1. *Shechem*] now Nāblus (the Roman Flavia Neapolis), 30 miles N. of Jerusalem, 5 miles S.E. of Samaria, situated in a narrow, fertile valley, at the entrance to which rise the two mountains, Ebal on the N. and Gerizim (*v.* 7) on the S. The town lies on the watershed (1870 ft.) between the Mediterranean and the Jordan basins, hence perhaps its name, *shoulder*. Easily dominated from the heights on either side, it could never defend itself against attack (*v.* 44 f.); but it had the great advantage of lying close to the crossing of the two main routes which traverse the country from N. to S. and from E. to W.; this accounts for the highway robbery in lawless times (*v.* 25, cf. Hos. vi. 9). The ancient Canaanite city is often mentioned in the patriarchal stories (Gen. xii. 6 J, xxxiii. 18 P, 19—20 E, xxxiv. J and P, xxxvii. 12 ff. J): how and when it passed into Israelite possession cannot be learnt with certainty, for the traditions differ; thus Gen. xlviii. 22 E does not agree with xxxiii. 19 E, Josh. xxiv. 32 E; and while Josh. xxiv. 1, 25, 26, 32 implies that the town was entirely Israelite before the death of Joshua, the present narrative shews that it was still largely Canaanite.

2. *the men of Shechem*] lit. *possessors* (plur. of *ba'al*) i.e. *citizens* of S.; so throughout this chap., cf. xx. 5, 1 Sam. xxiii. 11 f. etc.

all the sons of Jerubbaal] Evidently Gideon had exercised some kind of authority in Ophrah and its neighbourhood which his sons claimed to inherit; see on viii. 23. But we need not think of 70 men literally 'ruling'; Abimelech wanted to put the case in the worst light possible. If his mother had been a *ṣadāḳa* wife (cf. viii. 31), the children would have belonged to her clan and not the father's; this would make the appeal to 'bone and flesh' all the stronger, cf. Gen. xxix. 14, 2 Sam. v. 1, xix. 12 f.

4. *the house of Baal-berith*] In *v.* 46 El-bĕrîth = *God of the covenant*; see viii. 33 *n.* Temples in antiquity had their own treasuries into which offerings and fines were paid; they also served the purpose of banks for public and private money, cf. 2 Macc. iii. 10—12.

vain and light fellows] i.e. disreputable and reckless, cf. xi. 3, 2 Chr. xiii. 7.

5 hired vain and light fellows, which followed him. And he went unto his father's house at Ophrah, and slew his brethren the sons of Jerubbaal, being threescore and ten persons, upon one stone: but Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left; for he hid himself.

6 And all the men of Shechem assembled themselves together, and all [1]the house of Millo, and went and made Abimelech king, by the [2]oak of the [3]pillar that was in
7 Shechem. And when they told it to Jotham, he went and

[1] Or, *Beth-millo* [2] Or, *terebinth* [3] Or, *garrison*

5. *upon one stone*] as if they were sacrificial victims (cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 33 f.); perhaps also to avoid promiscuous blood-shed. For this Oriental manner of inaugurating a new reign cf. 2 Kings x. 1 ff., xi. 1. Jotham escaped, like Joash 2 K. xi. 2.

6. *and all the house of Millo*] Follow marg. *and all* **Beth-millo**, the name of a place not of a family *v.* 20, cf. 2 Kings xii. 20, in the neighbourhood of Shechem, but not the tower of S. mentioned in *vv.* 46—49. The name suggests that the place was called after the temple which stood there, *bêth* = 'temple' as in *v.* 4; *millo* = 'filling up,' so an artificial mound or terrace (in Assyrian *mulû*, *tamlû*). The Millo at Jerusalem was some part of the fortifications of the old Jebusite city, 2 Sam. v. 9, 1 K. xi. 27 (LXX. ἡ ἄκρα), ix. 15, 24; or possibly, as Winckler considers, the original site of the sanctuary (*Gesch. Isr.* ii. 252, *KAT.*[3], 239).

by the oak of the pillar] A sacred **terebinth** (cf. on vi. 11) at or near Shechem is mentioned in the stories of Abraham Gen. xii. 6 J and Jacob Gen. xxxv. 4 E, and in Josh. xxiv. 26 E ('in Jehovah's sanctuary'); in the last passage Joshua is said to have set up a stone beneath the oak. The stone is here called a 'pillar,' reading *maṣṣēbāh* for *muṣṣāb* (which does not make sense); the pillar marked a holy place among both Hebrews (Ex. xxiv. 4 E, Hos. iii. 4, x. 1, Is. xix. 19) and Canaanites (Ex. xxiii. 24 E, xxxiv. 13 J etc.). Abimelech was made king at the sanctuary, as Saul at Gilgal, 1 Sam. xi. 15.

7—21. *Jotham's fable.*

The author of the fable had several points in his mind: (*a*) the contrast between Gideon's refusal of the kingship and the arrogant claim of the son of his concubine; the other sons (or many respectable members of the community) had qualities which entitled them to rule; it was left to the mean 'bramble' to claim the rank of king; (*b*) a warning to the Shechemites of the dangerous character of their upstart chief; his protection was worthless if they trusted him, and if they did not he would be their ruin; (*c*) a rebuke of the Shechemites for their ingratitude towards the house of Gideon. The fable, however, is not entirely consistent with the moral drawn from it; especially after *v.* 15,

stood in the top of mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. The trees went 8
forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. But the olive tree 9
said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, [1]wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to wave to and fro over the trees? And the trees said to the fig tree, Come 10

[1] Or, *which God and man honour in me*

the connexion is so difficult to trace, that many think that the fable was not composed for the occasion but borrowed from the folk-tales current at the time. This is possible; nevertheless we can hardly look for rigid consistency in the details of a fable; similar inconsistencies may be found in some of the Gospel parables (e.g. St Lk. xvi. 1—9).

7. *the top of mount Gerizim*] is 979 ft. above the town: the language is not to be pressed.

8. *The trees went forth*] Cf. 2 Kings xiv. 9. Fables of trees that speak and act like human beings spring from the instinct for personification, which is a characteristic of an early stage of civilization; they were current not only among the Hebrews, but among the Babylonians and Assyrians. Part of a fable of this kind, taking the form of a dispute between the trees, has been discovered in the library of Ashurbanipal. Baudissin, *Adonis u. Esmun*, p. 436.

the olive] comes first, as being the most valuable and highly prized of the trees of Palestine. The olive, the vine and the fig are the staple products of the Judaean range. See G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, i. p. 299.

9. *my fatness*] i.e. the oil from the crushed berry, almost a necessity of life in Palestine, where it takes the place of butter.

wherewith by me they honour] For *by me* read *by it* (LXX. cod. B, Vulg., Targ.) i.e. **whereby they honour gods and men**, parallel to *cheereth gods and men* in *v.* 13; *they honour* has the force of a passive, *are honoured*. Probably to avoid this sense the text was altered to mean 'which God and man honour in me,' RVm., LXX. cod. A, Pesh. A staple article of man's daily food, oil was offered as sacrificial food to the gods, and among the Hebrews to Jehovah. But oil was not an article of food by itself; accordingly in Hebr. ritual it was not poured out as a libation, but used to moisten and enrich a cereal offering (Mic. vi. 7; Lev. ii. 1 ff.; Ex. xxix. 23, 40)[1]. Further, a guest was anointed as a sign of honour and festivity (Ps. xxiii. 5, xlv. 7, cxli. 5; cf. the anointing of a king and priest); on this analogy we may explain the ancient custom of pouring oil upon sacred stones (Gen. xxviii. 18 E, xxxv. 14 J; cf. the smearing of sacred furniture Ex. xxx. 24 ff. P). See Robertson Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*, pp. 203 f., 214 f.

[1] Cf. a similar usage among the Phoenicians, *NSI.*, p. 120 f.

11 thou, and reign over us. But the fig tree said unto them,
Should I leave my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to
12 wave to and fro over the trees? And the trees said unto
13 the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. And the vine said
unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God
14 and man, and go to wave to and fro over the trees? Then
said all the trees unto the [1]bramble, Come thou, and reign
15 over us. And the [1]bramble said unto the trees, If in truth
ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust
in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the [1]bramble,
16 and devour the cedars of Lebanon. Now therefore, if ye
have dealt truly and uprightly, in that ye have made
Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal
and his house, and have done unto him according to the
17 deserving of his hands; (for my father fought for you, and
[2]adventured his life, and delivered you out of the hand of
18 Midian: and ye are risen up against my father's house this
day, and have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons,

[1] Or, *thorn* [2] Heb. *cast his life before him.*

10. *fig*] One of the commonest trees in Palestine, and cultivated from very early days; cf. on *v.* 12.

11. *my sweetness*] The early ripe fig, especially, was and is esteemed for its flavour; see Is. xxviii. 4, Jer. xxiv. 2, Hos. ix. 10, Mic. vii. 1.

12. *the vine*] The old phrase 'to sit each under his vine and fig-tree,' denoting peaceful occupation of the land, shews how widely spread and ancient was the cultivation of the vine in Palestine; 1 K. iv. 25, Mic. iv. 4 etc.

13. *my wine*] **must** (Mic. vi. 15, Vulg. *mustum*), the unfermented juice as it comes from the wine-press[1]; but also the fermented juice, as is implied here and in Hos. iv. 11 ('taketh away the heart'); cf. Gen. xxvii. 37, Zech. ix. 17.

cheereth God and man] or *gods and men*, cf. *v.* 9; the reference is to libations (Num. xv. 7, xxviii. 7; Ecclus. l. 15) and feasts (Ps. civ. 15). See Rob. Smith *l. c.* 213 f.

14. *the bramble*] LXX., Vulg. rhamnus, the common, worthless thornbush, the very opposite of the noble trees just mentioned.

15. *put your trust in my shadow*] **take refuge in...**: an absurdity which sharpens the point of the moral.

let fire come out] A fire will sometimes spread from a thornbush to

[1] In 19 passages out of 38 *tîrôsh* 'must' is associated with 'corn and oil,' i.e. threshed corn and oil freshly expressed (though these words are also used of corn in the ear and oil in the berry), hence by analogy 'freshly expressed juice of the grape.' See Driver, *Joel and Amos*, p. 79 f.

upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maidservant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother;) if ye then have dealt truly and uprightly with 19
Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you: but if not, let 20
fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech. And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went 21
to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

And Abimelech was prince over Israel three years. And 22, 23
God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech: that the violence done to the threescore and 24
ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and that their blood might be laid upon Abimelech their brother, which slew them, and upon the men of Shechem, which strengthened his hands to slay his brethren. And the men of Shechem 25

the monarchs of the forest (cf. Is. ix. 18); the base bramble thus becomes the starting-point of all the ruin.

So the fable points a contrast: on the one hand were those who naturally would have been the men to rule, Gideon and his sons, or (generally) more than one able member of the community, but they would have nothing to do with the proposal; on the other hand was the worthless Abimelech, who not only seized power with avidity but threatened those who refused to submit to him. Here the fable is dropped, though an echo of it is heard in *v.* 20; what follows is not strictly an application of it, but a couple of fresh topics: a stern reproof of the Shechemites for ingratitude, and a warning that they and their upstart chief are doomed to destroy one another.

18. *his maidservant*] This goes beyond *v.* 1 and viii. 31, which imply that Abimelech's mother was not a slave but a freewoman.

19. *rejoice ye* etc.] Ironical: 'much joy may you have in each other,' cf. *v.* 15 a.

20. *but if not* etc.] 'Your chief will be fatal to you and you to him,' cf. *v.* 15 b. This was Jotham's 'curse'; the fulfilment comes in *vv.* 44 ff., 56 f.

21. *Beer*] Unknown; a common name = *a well.*

22—25. *The Shechemites turn against Abimelech.*

22. *was prince over Israel*] Strictly, as the whole ch. implies, only over Shechem and its neighbourhood (Ophrah, Thebez). The words are an editorial generalization. The title of *king* is purposely avoided.

23. *God sent an evil spirit*] i.e. an infatuation which led to their

set liers in wait for him on the tops of the mountains, and they robbed all that came along that way by them: and it was told Abimelech.

26 And Gaal the son of Ebed came with his brethren, and went over to Shechem: and the men of Shechem put their
27 trust in him. And they went out into the field, and gathered their vineyards, and trode *the grapes*, and [1]held festival, and went into the house of their god, and did eat and drink, and
28 cursed Abimelech. And Gaal the son of Ebed said, Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? is not he the son of Jerubbaal? and Zebul his officer? serve ye the men of Hamor the father of Shechem: but
29 why should we serve him? And would to God this people were under my hand! then would I remove Abimelech.

[1] Or, *offered a praise offering*

destruction, and so carried out the punishment which God determined. Where we speak of secondary causes, the ancients thought of the direct intervention of God; cf. 1 Sam. xvi. 14, 1 K. xxii. 21 ff., Am. iii. 6. *Elohim* is thought to indicate that *vv.* 22—25 come from the source E; *v.* 24 goes with *vv.* 16—18.

25. *liers in wait for him*] They hoped to catch A., who apparently was non-resident, and failing him, they plundered his friends. From the heights round Shechem the roads are easily watched. Probably in their original context *vv.* 22—25 were followed by *vv.* 42—45; on being told of the treason, A. at once (*v.* 43) took measures.

26—41. *Gaal stirs up the Shechemites: Abimelech defeats them.*

26. *Gaal the son of Ebed*] i.e. *of a slave*; but pronounce throughout *Obed*, with LXX. cod. B (Ιωβηλ for Ιωβηδ) and Vulg.; a common name. Gaal is described as a new-comer, whether an Israelite or a Canaanite is not clear. *Vv.* 26—33 seem to be parallel to *vv.* 22—25; both narrate the rise of treason in Shechem, and both lead up to parallel accounts of Abimelech's retaliation.

27. *held festival*] **held a merry-making.** The marg. *offered a praise offering* is based upon the special sense of the word in Lev. xix. 24; here, more generally, a vintage feast like the one described in xxi. 19 ff. Cf. the orgiastic feasts held by the Carthaginians, no doubt in the temples; *North-Sem. Inscr.*, p. 121 f.

28. *who is Shechem?*] i.e. what is Abimelech's kingdom, that we should be bound to obey him? does it belong to him of right?

is not...serve ye] As it stands the text does not make sense; read the imperat. *serve ye* as a perf., *they served*, and translate **Did not the son of J. and Z. his officer serve the men of Hamor, the father of Shechem? why then should we serve him?** Gaal works upon the

And he said [1]to Abimelech, Increase thine army, and come
out. And when Zebul the ruler of the city heard the words 30
of Gaal the son of Ebed, his anger was kindled. And he 31
sent messengers unto Abimelech [2]craftily, saying, Behold,
Gaal the son of Ebed and his brethren are come to Shechem;
and, behold, they [3]constrain the city *to take part* against thee.
Now therefore, up by night, thou and the people that is with 32
thee, and lie in wait in the field: and it shall be, that in the 33
morning, as soon as the sun is up, thou shalt rise early, and
set upon the city: and, behold, when he and the people
that is with him come out against thee, then mayest thou do
to them [4]as thou shalt find occasion.

And Abimelech rose up, and all the people that were 34
with him, by night, and they laid wait against Shechem in
four companies. And Gaal the son of Ebed went out, and 35
stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and Abimelech
rose up, and the people that were with him, from the
ambushment. And when Gaal saw the people, he said to 36
Zebul, Behold, there come people down from the tops of

[1] Or, *of* [2] Or, *in Tormah*
[3] Or, *oppress the city on thy account*
[4] Heb. *as thine hand shall find.*

Shechemites' national pride: 'this chief of yours and his lieutenant were once the servants of the ancient race which sprang from Hamor (the traditional founder of Shechem, cf. Gen. xxxiv.); are *we*, the freemen of Shechem, to become the servants of this usurping half-breed?' The emphasis is on *we*, in antithesis to 'the son of J.' etc.

29. *And he said*] Read with a slight change **and I would say**, so LXX.; cf. *v.* 38.

30. *Zebul the ruler of the city*] He ruled as the representative of Abimelech; cf. for the title (*sar*) 1 K. xxii. 26, 2 K. xxiii. 8. He had no force at his disposal; all he could do was to warn his master of Gaal's treason and advise an immediate attack.

31. *craftily*] The form of the Hebr. word is suspicious and the meaning unsuitable; read **in Arumah**, mentioned as Abimelech's dwelling-place in *v.* 41.

they constrain the city] An attempt to translate the unusual construction of the Hebr. verb, which means *besiege* (so Verss.). But the text is at fault; perhaps we should read *they are stirring up.*

33. *set upon*] *make a dash upon, rush forward against*, from a place of hiding, cf. *v.* 44, xx. 37.

as thou shalt find occasion] For the idiom (see marg.) cf. 1 Sam. x. 7, xxv. 8, Eccl. ix. 10.

the mountains. And Zebul said unto him, Thou seest the
37 shadow of the mountains as if they were men. And Gaal
spake again and said, See, there come people down by the
[1]middle of the land, and one company cometh by the way
38 of [2]the oak of Meonenim. Then said Zebul unto him,
Where is now thy mouth, that thou saidst, Who is Abimelech,
that we should serve him? is not this the people that thou
hast despised? go out now, I pray, and fight with them.
39 And Gaal went out before the men of Shechem, and fought
40 with Abimelech. And Abimelech chased him, and he fled
before him, and there fell many wounded, even unto the
41 entering of the gate. And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah:
and Zebul drave out Gaal and his brethren, that they should

[1] Heb. *navel.* [2] That is, *the augurs' oak* or *terebinth.*

37. *the middle of the land*] **the Navel of the land**; this is the traditional meaning of the word, Talm., LXX. ὀμφαλός, Vulg. umbilicus. The word only occurs again in Ezek. xxxviii. 12 of the mountains of Israel, apparently as central and prominent in the earth. Some hill near Shechem was called the Navel, perhaps because it was supposed to be midway between the sea and the Jordan (cf. *the navel* of Italy, Sicily, Greece, in Latin authors).

the oak of Meonenim] **the augurs' terebinth** (marg.), the seat of a Canaanite tree-oracle, administered by priests here called *augurs* or *soothsayers*, cf. Dt. xviii. 10, Mic. v. 12; the omens were taken, it seems, from the rustling leaves or waving boughs (2 Sam. v. 24), or by the "ordinary processes of divination performed in the presence of the sacred object" (R. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*, p. 178). The allusions to a sacred terebinth at or near Shechem (*v.* 6, Gen. xii. 6, xxxv. 4, Dt. xi. 30, Josh. xxiv. 26) need not all refer to the same tree. See further on *v.* 6 and vi. 11.

38. *thy mouth*] i.e. thy boastful mockery; cf. Is. lvii. 4, Ps. xxxv. 21, Job xvi. 10.

40. *wounded*] i.e. mortally, so **slain**, 1 Sam. xxxi. 1, 1 Chr. v. 22, 2 Chr. xiii. 17; cf. xvi. 24.

the entering of the gate] Cf. *v.* 44. The city gateway (*sha'ar*) was a large building and covered a considerable space, cf. Josh. xx. 4, 1 K. xxii. 10; it included a high entrance (*péthaḥ*) and a door (*déleth*), or doors, with posts and bars, xvi. 3. Abimelech did not enter the city, probably because he thought that the Shechemites had been punished enough. Zebul was now in a position to deal with Gaal and his following, *v.* 41.

41. *Arumah*] Unknown; cl-'Örme (the initial letter is different), 2 m. S.E. of Nāblus, has been suggested. This verse evidently brings the narrative to an end.

not dwell in Shechem. And it came to pass on the morrow, 42
that the people went out into the field; and they told
Abimelech. And he took the people, and divided them 43
into three companies, and laid wait in the field; and he
looked, and, behold, the people came forth out of the city;
and he rose up against them, and smote them. And 44
Abimelech, and the companies that were with him, rushed
forward, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city:
and the two companies rushed upon all that were in the
field, and smote them. And Abimelech fought against the 45
city all that day; and he took the city, and slew the people
that was therein: and he beat down the city, and sowed it
with salt.

42—49. *Abimelech destroys Shechem and Migdal-Shechem.*

After the Shechemites have suffered the severe defeat just described, and Abimelech has retired and dwelt at Arumah, it is incredible that, on the next morning, the people should come out of the city as if nothing had happened, and that Abimelech should be able to surprise them by the same device which had proved so successful the day before. All difficulties disappear if we regard these verses, not as the sequel to 34—41, but as a second account of Abimelech's attack on Shechem, originally following 22—25. The Shechemites break out into open treason (*v.* 25); A. takes instant ('on the morrow' *v.* 42) and severe revenge. Moore thinks that *vv.* 22—25 are derived from E, *vv.* 42—49 and *vv.* 26—41 from J.

42. *the people went out*] Perhaps to lie in wait for passers by, if we connect this verse with *v.* 25.

43. *three companies*] Cf. vii. 16.

44. *the companies that were*] Read **the company that was**, with Vulg. and some MSS. of LXX.; *rushed forward*, as the same word in *v.* 33 is to be rendered.

45. *sowed it with salt*] Usually explained as a symbolic act shewing that A. had reduced the city to a salt, uninhabitable desert; cf. Dt. xxix. 23, Jer. xvii. 6, Ps. cvii. 34, Job xxxix. 6. More probably the strewing of salt had a religious significance (cf. Ezek. xliii. 24) and denoted the sacrificial consecration of the city which, to judge from its utter destruction, had been put under the ban to Jehovah (see on i. 17); *Rel. of Sem.*, p. 435 *n.* The custom is mentioned only here in the O.T.; but it is referred to in the great historical inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser I (*circ.* 1100 B.C.) and Ashurbanipal (668—626 B.C.); *Keilinschr. Biblioth.* i. p. 37 and ii. p. 207[1]. There is a tradition that Attila treated Padua, and Frederick Barbarossa treated Milan, in this way. Early in 1828

[1] The transl. 'stones' and 'dry sand' given here is to be corrected to 'salt'; Zimmern in Gunkel, *Genesis*, p. 193.

46 And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard
thereof, they entered into the hold of the house of [1]El-berith.
47 And it was told Abimelech that all the men of the tower of
48 Shechem were gathered together. And Abimelech gat him
up to mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with
him; and Abimelech took [2]an axe in his hand, and cut down
a bough from the trees, and took it up, and laid it on his
shoulder: and he said unto the people that were with him,
What ye have seen me do, make haste, and do as I have
49 done. And all the people likewise cut down every man
his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put them to the
hold, and set the hold on fire upon them; so that all the
men of the tower of Shechem died also, about a thousand
men and women.
50 Then went Abimelech to Thebez, and encamped against
51 Thebez, and took it. But there was a strong tower within

[1] See ch. viii. 33. [2] Heb. *the axes.*

Ibrahim Pasha, after blowing up and burning Tripolitza, sprinkled salt over the ruins[1].

46. *the tower of Shechem*] **Migdal-Shechem** or **Tower of Shechem**, not the citadel of S., but an unwalled village in the neighbourhood, marked by a tower, cf. viii. 9, 17.

the hold of the house of El-berith] The rendering *hold v.* 49, i.e. an underground excavation, suits the only other place where the word (*ṣerîaḥ*) occurs, 1 Sam. xiii. 6; in Nabataean Aramaic the word is used for the *vault* of a grave (*NSI.*, pp. 237, 241); it is frequently found in Arabic epitaphs from Egypt with the sense of *tomb* (Clermont Ganneau, *Recueil d'Arch. Or.*, vii. p. 200). So in *v.* 49; they laid the faggots upon the *vault*, set the *vault* on fire over the heads of the people within. For El-bĕrîth cf. *v.* 4, viii. 33 Baal-bĕrîth.

48. *mount Zalmon*] An unknown hill hard by; in Ps. lxviii. 14 it is the name of a hill on the E. of the Jordan.

an axe] The Hebr. has *the axes*; the plur. cannot be explained (note *in his hand*), and must be corrected to the sing., LXX. cod. A, Vulg.; read **his axe**.

49. *upon them*] See *v.* 46 *n.*

50—57. *The end of Abimelech.*

50. *Thebez*] 2 Sam. xi. 21, probably the modern Ṭūbās, about 10 m. N.E. of Nāblus on the road to Bēsān; so Eusebius, *On. Sacr.*,

[1] K. Mendelssohn Bartholdy, *Gesch. Griechenlands*, ii. p. 99. This reference is due to Prof. J. E. B. Mayor.

the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city, and shut themselves in, and gat them up to the roof of the tower. And Abimelech came unto the tower, 52 and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire. And a certain woman cast an 53 upper millstone upon Abimelech's head, and brake his skull. Then he called hastily unto the young man his armourbearer, 54 and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and kill me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died. And when the men of 55 Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place. Thus God requited the wickedness of 56 Abimelech, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren: and all the wickedness of the men of 57 Shechem did God requite upon their heads: and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

262, 44. Perhaps Thebez had been subject to Abimelech and had joined the revolt of Shechem.

51. *and all they of the city*] (even) **all the citizens of the city**, the same word as that translated *men* in *vv.* 2 (see note), 23, 26 etc.; *and* should be omitted, unless *citizens* means 'the chief men,' which is not the case elsewhere in this chapter.

53. *upper millstone*] lit. 'millstone of riding'; i.e. the upper stone of a mill turned by a handle, the lower stone being stationary. In Palestine the grinding of corn for the household was, and still is, done by the women (Eccl. xii. 3, St Mt. xxiv. 41); this explains how a woman came to use such a weapon. Cf. iv. 21.

54. *armourbearer*] Cf. vii. 10 f., 1 Sam. xxxi. 4.

and kill me] *and dispatch me*, i.e. give the death stroke; cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 13, xvii. 51, especially 2 Sam. i. 9 f. The first aspirant to kingship and the first real king in Israel met their deaths in the same way.

55. *the men of Israel*] Though A. was only half an Israelite, his force was made up of Israelites; he put himself at the head of the Israelite enterprise against the Canaanites—such were the natives of Thebez; and with his death united action of this kind seems to have ceased.

57. *the curse of Jotham*] See *v.* 20. The writer has a strong sense that God controls history, and that His control is just, *v.* 56.

Ch. x. 1—5. *The Minor Judges: Tola and Jair.*

The five Minor Judges, Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon (xii. 8—15), are so called because, unlike the other Judges, they fill but a small place in the general history; no record of their exploits has been preserved. Sometimes Shamgar is grouped with them, but see the

10 And after Abimelech there arose to save Israel Tola the
son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he
2 dwelt in Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim. And he
judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was
buried in Shamir.
3 And after him arose Jair, the Gileadite; and he judged

notes on iii. 31. These five Judges are regarded as carrying on the succession (*and after...there arose*, x. 1, 3 etc.), and, according to the view adopted in the Introduction § 2 A, the 76 years assigned to them (with Jephthah's 6) are included in the chronological scheme of the book. In each case the few bare particulars are cast into the same form, clearly by the same hand, which is not that of the Deuteronomic editor; the latter uses quite a different formula to conclude each period (iii. 30, v. 31, viii. 28). It seems probable that these notices were in existence before the Dtc. editor set to work; their general character is early rather than late; they appear to be founded on ancient traditions, like the somewhat similar details embedded in the genealogies of 1 Chron. (e.g. i. 46, ii. 7, 22 f., iv. 9 f., 27, 39 ff. etc). Out of the five names, three, Tola, Jair, Elon, occur elsewhere as the names of clans; the other two were probably clan-names also: but it would be rash to conclude that these names were never borne by individuals.

1. *to save Israel*] Cf. ii. 16, 18, iii. 9 f.

Tola the son of Puah] According to Gen. xlvi. 13, Num. xxvi. 23 (P), 1 Chr. vii. 1, Tola and Puah were brothers, 'sons,' i.e. clans of Issachar. Tola means 'the crimson worm,' 'cochineal,' and Puah probably 'madder,' a plant from which a red dye was obtained, in Arab. *fûh*; the coincidence can hardly be accidental; see Deut. xxxiii. 19.

the son of Dodo] The name again in 2 Sam. xxiii. 9, 24, 1 Chr. xi. 12, 26; varieties of it are David, Dodavahu, Eldad; the Babyl. form *Dûdu* occurs in the Amarna letters, e.g. 44 and 45; on the Moab. St. l. 12 *Daudoh*, apparently a local god worshipped by the Israelites E. of Jordan. *Dod*=lit. 'loved one,' then 'kinsman,' 'uncle'; so LXX. and Syr. render here 'the son of his [Abimelech's] uncle.'

in Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim] Site unknown; not the Shamir of Josh xv. 48, which was in Judah. LXX. A and Luc. read *Samaria*, replacing a strange name by a familiar one. In historical times the territory of Issachar lay to the N.E. of the Plain of Jezreel; from this verse we learn that at least one clan of the tribe had its seat further south. There may have been some connexion between Shamir and Shimron, a clan of Issachar (Gen. xlvi. 13, Num. xxvi. 24).

2. *And he judged*] *v.* 3; see iii. 10 *n.*

and was buried in Shamir] 'We are probably to infer that the tomb of the eponymous ancestor of the clan was in later times shewn at Shamir' (Moore). This applies, with different names, to similar notices of the other Minor Judges.

3. *Jair, the Gileadite*] Called 'the son of Manasseh' in Num. xxxii. 41, Dt. iii, 14, cf. Josh. xiii. 30; in 1 Chr. ii. 21 ff. he is the

Israel twenty and two years. And he had thirty sons that 4
rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which
are called [1]Havvoth-jair unto this day, which are in the land
of Gilead. And Jair died, and was buried in Kamon. 5

[1] That is, *The towns of Jair*. See Num. xxxii. 41.

great-grandson of Machir. Gilead was the name applied generally to the country E. of the Jordan, between the south end of the Sea of Tiberias and the north end of the Dead Sea.

4. *he had thirty sons*] Cf. xii. 9, 14. The 'sons' are expressly connected with the thirty settlements of the clan. Numerous descendants indicated power and wealth.

that rode on thirty ass colts] A mark of rank; cf. xii. 14, 2 Kings iv. 22, Zech. ix. 9; see on v. 10.

Havvoth-jair] i.e. *tent-villages* (LXX. ἐπαύλεις) *of Jair*; cf. Arab. *ḥiwâ* = 'a group of tents near together.' Long after the tents of nomads had given place to permanent dwellings or 'cities' the old name still survived. The Havvoth-jair are frequently mentioned, but the accounts of them are not all consistent. Here and in Num. xxxii. 41 they are said to have been situated in Gilead; 1 Kings iv. 13 (prob. borrowed from Num. l.c.) and 1 Chr. ii. 22 agree with this. But according to Dt. iii. 14, followed by Josh. xiii. 30, they lay in Bashan; the statement, however, seems to be due to an attempt to harmonize Dt. iii. 13 f. with Num. xxxii. 39, 41 (Driver, *Deut.*, p. 55). Again, the capture and naming of these towns is dated in different periods, in the time of Moses according to Num. l.c., and in the time of the Judges here. But the inconsistency lies only on the surface. Num. xxxii. 39—42 is an ancient fragment incorporated into a later account (JE and P) of the conquest of E. Jordan, apparently for the purpose of bringing Manasseh's occupation of this district within the Mosaic period; the fragment closely resembles the brief traditions preserved in Judg. i. and may be taken to refer to the same period, viz. that of the Judges, to which the present verse assigns the episode. Later on the Havvoth-jair seem to have passed into the hands of another race, cf. 1 Chr. ii. 23 (RV.), which probably reflects the conditions of a subsequent age. The difference in the numbers of the villages, thirty, thirty-two (LXX. here), twenty-three (1 Chron. ii. 22), is not important.

5. *Kamon*] Probably E. of Jordan, and perhaps identical with the Kamūn mentioned by Polybius next after Pella as taken by Antiochus the Great (v. 70, 12). Buhl thinks of Kumēm, W. of Irbid (*Geogr.*, p. 256).

6—8. *Introduction to the story of Jephthah.*

Apostasy followed by oppression, the cry for help by deliverance: such is the religious interpretation of the succeeding period given by the Dtc. editor in his accustomed manner. His phrases appear in *vv.* 6 and 7, cf. ii. 11, 13, iii. 7 etc. This summary is much longer than usual, and resembles ii. 6—iii. 6 in its general character and scope (see

6 And the children of Israel again did that which was evil
in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baalim, and the
Ashtaroth, and the gods of [1]Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and
the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon,
and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook the LORD,
7 and served him not. And the anger of the LORD was kind-
led against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of the
Philistines, and into the hand of the children of Ammon.
8 And they vexed and oppressed the children of Israel that
year: eighteen years *oppressed they* all the children of Israel
that were beyond Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which
9 is in Gilead. And the children of Ammon passed over Jordan
to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and

[1] Heb. *Aram.*

Introd. § 2 B). The Dtc. editor seems to have expanded an earlier and shorter preface which is probably contained in *vv.* 10—16, and shews signs of relationship with the source E. Verses 6b, 8 (in part), the end of 11 and the beginning of 12, appear to be still later expansions. It is surprising to find such a long introduction in the middle of the book; perhaps it was expanded, first by the Dtc. editor and then by a later hand, in order to cover not only the Ammonite, but the Philistine oppression, in fact all the remaining portion of the history. The last two verses (17 and 18) appear to be simply derived from the following chapter (as viii. 33—35 from ch. ix.), and intended to connect the passing reference to the Ammonite invasion in *vv.* 7 and 8 with the more detailed narrative which follows.

6. *again did that which was evil* etc.] Cf. ii. 11, 13, iii. 7, iv. 1, vi. 1, xiii. 1; phrases of the Dtc. editor.

the gods of Syria...Philistines] i.e. of all the surrounding nations; cf. ii. 12 Strictly speaking, the mention of 'the gods of the Ammonites' alone is appropriate to the narrative *v.* 17—xi. 33. The sentence appears to be a generalizing expansion from the hand of the latest editor, like the list of oppressors in *v.* 11.

7. *sold them...Philistines*] As the history stands, this did not happen till after the Ammonite oppression, xiii. 1. The reference to the Philistines may be due to the editorial process which aimed at making the present introduction cover both oppressions. See above.

8. *they vexed*] The subject is 'the children of Ammon' (see on *v.* 17).

that year: eighteen years] cannot be right; either *that year* (marking the beginning of the oppression, xi. 4) has slipped in from some other place, or *eighteen years* belonged originally to the end of *v.* 7, cf. iii. 14. The extension of the oppression to *all the children of I.* on both sides of the Jordan is probably due to the latest editor.

against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed. And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, 10 saying, We have sinned against thee, even because we have forsaken our God, and have served the Baalim. And the 11 LORD said unto the children of Israel, *Did* not *I save you* from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines? The Zidonians also, 12 and the Amalekites, and the [1]Maonites, did oppress you; and ye cried unto me, and I saved you out of their hand. Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore 13 I will save you no more. Go and cry unto the gods which 14 ye have chosen; let them save you in the time of your distress. And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, 15 We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; only deliver us, we pray thee, this day. And 16

[1] The Sept. has, *Midianites.*

9. *was sore distressed*] Cf. ii. 15.

10. The oppression is followed by the cry for help; cf. iii. 9, 15, iv. 3, vi. 6, 7. For the confession cf. *v.* 15, 1 Sam. xii. 10.

11. *not...from the Egyptians*] The missing verb is supplied by the RV., cf. Ex. xiv. 30; *did not I bring you up* would be better—the verb usually found with *from Egypt*, ii. 1, vi. 8; then the rest of the verse must be an editorial expansion. But if the restoration of the RV. be kept, the whole verse can be regarded as a conventional summary; no distinct oppression by the Amorites is recorded.

12. *The Zidonians...Amalekites...Maonites*] The generalizing list of oppressors is continued. The Zidonians, i.e. Phoenicians (iii. 3 *n.*), do not appear elsewhere in this character; perhaps the name was suggested by *v.* 6. The Amalekites are mentioned as allies of Moab in iii. 13, and of Midian in vi. 3 (see note); cf. Ex. xvii. 8—16 E. The Maonites (*Maon* is the form here) probably=the Meunim, 1 Chr. iv. 41, 2 Chr. xx. 1 (RVm.), xxvi. 7—all late passages; the Meunim, who are referred to as hostile to Israel, were an Arab race inhabiting the Edomite country; their name survives in Ma'ān, 6 hours S.E. of Petra. Perhaps the post-exilic editor included Maon in this list as being an enemy familiar to later times. On the supposed connexion between the Maonites (Meunim) and the Minaeans see *HDB.* s.v. The LXX. reads *Midian* here, and many scholars adopt the correction; but it is suspiciously obvious.

13. *forsaken me*] Cf. *v.* 10, ii. 12, 13.

other gods] D's expression: Deut. vii. 4, xi. 16 etc., cf. Josh. xxiv. 2, 16.

14. For the thought cf. Deut. xxxii. 37, 38, Jer. ii. 28.

they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the LORD: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.

17 Then the children of Ammon were gathered together, and encamped in Gilead. And the children of Israel assembled
18 themselves together, and encamped in Mizpah. And the people, the princes of Gilead, said one to another, What man is he that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? he shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

15. For the submission to Jehovah's will cf. 1 Sam. iii. 18, 2 Sam. xv. 26.

16. The first half of the verse resembles Gen. xxxv. 2 E, Josh. xxiv. 20—23 E, 1 Sam. vii. 3.

strange gods] i.e. *foreign* gods, E's expression: Josh. xxiv. 20, 23, etc.; contrast *other gods*, *v.* 13.

was grieved] lit. *was shortened*, cf. xvi. 16, Ex. vi. 9, Num. xxi. 4, Zech. xi. 8; i.e. He lost patience, He could bear Israel's distress no longer. Jehovah's impatience (cf. Mic. ii. 7 RVm.) is aroused by mingled pity and indignation.

17. On this and the following verse see above. The Ammonites occupied the district which lay to the N.E. of Moab, bordered by the eastern desert. Their chief city was Rabbath-ammon, in Greek Philadelphia, now 'Ammān, near the source of the Jabbok; their other cities (xi. 33, 2 Sam. xii. 31) were insignificant. Like the Moabites, the Ammonites were regarded as akin to Israel, but with feelings of repugnance, Gen. xix. 36 ff.; probably also, like the Moabites, they spoke a language closely allied to that of Israel. In the days of Saul (1 Sam. xi.) and David (2 Sam. x.—xii.) their hostility broke out afresh. The Bedouin on the edge of the Syrian desert have always been ready to plunder the agricultural country within reach.

encamped in Gilead] Here apparently a city, cf. Hos. vi. 8, perhaps the modern Jal'ūd, on the high ground a little S. of the Jabbok.

encamped in Mizpah] Cf. xi. 11, 34, apparently = Mizpeh of Gilead xi. 29; the name (which belongs to several places) means 'outlook point,' LXX. here ἡ σκοπιά, and implies a situation commanding a view; Jebel Osha', near es-Salt, not far S. of Jal'ūd, would suit the conditions. Among other sites proposed, that of Ḳal'at er-Rabaḍ, N. of Jal'ūd and of the Jabbok, may be mentioned. At Mizpah was a sanctuary of Jehovah, and the home of Jephthah (xi. 11, 34). The Israelites gathered to the camp, but as yet they had no leader.

18. *the people, the princes of Gilead, said*] The apposition is unusually harsh; perhaps *the princes of Gilead* was inserted on the strength of xi. 5—11, where *the elders of G.* are the persons concerned with looking out for a leader.

Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valour, 11
and he was the son of an harlot: and Gilead begat Jephthah.
And Gilead's wife bare him sons; and when his wife's sons 2

Ch. xi. 1—xii. 7. *Jephthah's victory over the Ammonites, his vow, and punishment of the men of Ephraim.*

The Ammonite invasion made it necessary for the Israelites on the east of Jordan to find a leader: there was nothing for it but to choose Jephthah, the warlike captain of a band of freebooters. Jephthah made his terms, and while at Mizpah in Gilead vowed before Jehovah that, if victorious, he would sacrifice the first person who met him on his return home. The fulfilment of the vow is told with equal skill and reserve; henceforth it became an annual custom for Israelite women to spend four days in mourning for Jephthah's daughter. A dispute with the arrogant men of Ephraim is followed by ruthless vengeance. The story closes with the formula used for the Minor Judges.

As it stands the narrative is a composite structure. The account of Jephthah's origin (xi. 1, 2) contains features which are partly late and partly based upon *v.* 7; *vv.* 4 and 5 a practically say the same thing; *v.* 11 b can hardly be the proper sequel of 11 a, and the whole verse is inconsistent with 29; the negotiations with Ammon (12—28) reproduce the negotiations with *Moab* in JE's narrative Num. xx. and xxi. The present form of the story has been explained as due to the combination of two documents, J and E, such as exists in the account of Gideon, or to the confusion of two traditions, one relating a campaign against the Ammonites, the other a campaign against the Moabites. But the distinction between two documents, or two different traditions, cannot be worked out with much certainty; and the simplest explanation seems to be that which Moore supports, viz. that the narrative as a whole has been interpolated (xi. 12—28), and in places adapted by editorial hands (xi. 1 b, 2, 5 a, 29, xii. 7).

1. *Jephthah*] Hebr. *Yiphtaḥ*, probably a shortened form of Yiphtaḥ-el = *God will open*; cf. Pethah-iah Ezr. x. 23. The full form occurs as the name of a town Josh. xix. 14, 27.

the Gileadite] See on x. 3. The land of Gilead generally included the country E. of Jordan between the W. el-Menādire (Yarmuk), S. of the Sea of Galilee, and W. Ḥesbān near the upper end of the Dead Sea. Sometimes it included the Moabite territory as far S. as the Arnon (W. el-Mōjīb).

Gilead begat Jephthah] Gilead, properly the name of a region or its population, is here and in *v.* 2, Josh. xvii. 1 f., 1 Chr. vii. 14 ff., regarded as a person, i.e. tribal history is related as though it were the domestic history of an individual; see Driver, *HDB.* s.v. Gilead. These words and the verse which follows evidently come from the late editor, *begat* is the usual term in the genealogies of P and Chron.

2. *And Gilead's wife*] i.e. the lawful wife in distinction from *another woman* (1 Chr. ii. 26). In *v.* 7 it is the elders of Gilead, not his half-brothers, who drove Jephthah out of his home; the present verse seems

grew up, they drave out Jephthah, and said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house; for thou art the son
3 of another woman. Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob: and there were gathered vain fellows to Jephthah, and they went out with him.
4 And it came to pass after a while, that the children of
5 Ammon made war against Israel. And it was so, that when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob:
6 and they said unto Jephthah, Come and be our chief, that
7 we may fight with the children of Ammon. And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, Did not ye hate me, and drive me out of my father's house? and why are ye come
8 unto me now when ye are in distress? And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore are we turned again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight with the

to be an attempt to provide some account of Jephthah's antecedents by inference from *his brethren* (properly *his tribesmen*, xiv. 3) in *v.* 3, and from *v.* 7.

3. *the land of Tob*] A Syrian district near the territory of Gilead (*v.* 5), 2 Sam. x. 6, 8; cf. 1 Macc. v. 13, 2 Macc. xii. 17 (probably the same place). A town now called et-Ṭaiyibe between Der'āt and Bostra perhaps preserves the name and indicates the situation.

vain fellows] i.e. worthless fellows, ix. 4, and cf. 1 Sam. xxii. 1 f.

4. *after a while*] An indefinite mark of time as in xiv. 8, xv. 1. The wording implies that the Ammonites have not been mentioned before; this is another reason for believing that the introductory notice x. 6—18 was composed later than the present passage.

5. *And it was so...against Israel*] These words, which merely repeat *v.* 4, presuppose that the history has already begun, and were perhaps inserted to connect with x. 17 f. In some recensions of the LXX. they are wanting, in others *v.* 4 is omitted.

the elders of Gilead] means no more than the sheikhs of the district.

6. *chief*] i.e. commander in war, Josh. x. 24, Dan. xi. 18 (RVm.); the same word as the Arabic *ḳāḍi*.

7. *and drive me out of my father's house*] See *v.* 2 *n.* Apparently custom allowed certain rights to the sons of concubines, as in the ancient Babylonian code of Hammurabi; S. A. Cook, *Moses and Hammurabi*, p. 141.

8. *Therefore are we turned again*] i.e. this being so, since we have driven thee out. Instead of answering the objection directly, the elders state the reason for the reply they give. For this idiom in conversation cf. viii. 7, Gen. iv. 15, xxx. 15, 1 Kings xxii. 19.

head...Gilead] Similarly x. 18.

children of Ammon, and thou shalt be our head over all the
inhabitants of Gilead. And Jephthah said unto the elders 9
of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight with the
children of Ammon, and the LORD deliver them before me,
shall I be your head? And the elders of Gilead said unto 10
Jephthah, The LORD shall be [1]witness between us; surely
according to thy word so will we do. Then Jephthah went 11
with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head
and chief over them: and Jephthah spake all his words
before the LORD in Mizpah.

And Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the 12

[1] Heb. *hearer*.

9. *shall I be...?*] Rather **it is I who am to be your head**, accepting the agreement in *v.* 6.

10. *witness*] Note marg.; the expression only here. The invocation of Jehovah's presence is necessary to complete a solemn agreement; cf. Gen. xxxi. 49.

11. The second half of the verse comes awkwardly after the announcement of Jephthah's promotion; and as it stands *his words* must refer to *v.* 9. But would he repeat them to give additional solemnity to the agreement? He would be more likely to make the elders repeat their promise *before Jehovah*. On the other hand 11 b would come in most suitably after *v.* 31. Accepting the terms offered by the sheikhs (11 a), Jephthah makes his vow (*vv.* 30, 31) *before Jehovah*, i.e. before the altar or pillar in the sanctuary or high-place of Mizpah (*v.* 11 b), and then sets out to attack the Ammonites and defeats them (*vv.* 32, 33). We must suppose that the original form of the narrative has been disturbed by the insertion of *vv.* 12—28. For Mizpah see on x. 17.

The section *vv.* 12—28 purports to give an account of Jephthah's negotiations with the king of Ammon. First comes a formal protest against the Ammonite invasion with a reply (*vv.* 12, 13): then the real subject of dispute follows—the occupation of the territory between the Arnon and the Jabbok. After *v.* 15 the Ammonites drop out to reappear in *vv.* 27, 28, and the Moabites, who were the people really concerned with this district, enter the discussion. An appeal is made to past history as recorded in JE's narrative, Num. xx. 14—18, xxi. 21—24. At the period of the Israelite invasion the disputed territory was in the hands of the Amorites, from whom Israel won it by conquest (*v.* 22); and in it Israel settled down (*v.* 26). The argument, then, is aimed at the Moabites, not the Ammonites; the deity referred to in *v.* 24 is Moabite, and so are the cities in *v.* 26. In fact the whole passage has only a superficial connexion at the beginning and end with Jephthah's campaign; it looks like an insertion made at some period when Israel wished to put forward a claim to the district, and to judge from the

children of Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me,
13 that thou art come unto me to fight against my land? And
the king of the children of Ammon answered unto the
messengers of Jephthah, Because Israel took away my land,
when he came up out of Egypt, from Arnon even unto
Jabbok, and unto Jordan: now therefore restore those *lands*
14 again peaceably. And Jephthah sent messengers again
15 unto the king of the children of Ammon: and he said unto
him, Thus saith Jephthah: Israel took not away the land of
16 Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon: but when
they came up from Egypt, and Israel walked through the

dependence of the passage upon JE's narrative in Num., this period was later than the 8th century B.C. The territory in question changed masters frequently; Moabites and Amorites, Moabites and Israelites, held it in succession; see Num. xxi. 26, 2 Sam. viii. 2; Moabite Stone lines 5 ff., Is. xv. 2 ff., Jer. xlviii. 1 ff. The alternative course is to suppose that we have here a combination of two narratives of two campaigns, one against Ammon and the other against Moab; the above explanation, however, seems to involve fewer difficulties.

12. *with me*] i.e. the people represented by Jephthah; see on *v.* 17.

my land...from Arnon even unto Jabbok] The Arnon, now called Wadi el-Mōjīb, descends from the E. and flows into the Dead Sea at a point almost in the middle of the eastern shore; it formed the southern boundary of Moab at the time of the Exodus (*v.* 18, Num. xxi. 13). The Jabbok, now Nahr ez-Zerḳā = 'the *blue* river,' like the Arnon, is a perennial stream; it rises to the S. of 'Ammān (Rabbath-ammon), runs northward and hence is called 'the border of the sons of Ammon' (Dt. iii. 16, Josh. xii. 2), curves round to the W., and so winds its way down to the Jordan which it enters 44½ m. due N. of the Arnon. The district between the two rivers naturally lay exposed to the incursions of the Ammonites, who lived to the E. of it (Num. xxi. 24); but there is no support for the Ammonites' claim to regard it as *my land* at the time of the Israelite invasion, when the territory in question was held by the Amorites, *vv.* 21 f., Num. xxi. 23 f.

those lands] Rather, the cities of the district understood (*v.* 33); lit. *them*.

15. *nor the land of...Ammon*] So Num. xxi. 24, Dt. ii. 19, 37.

16. *the wilderness...the Red Sea...Kadesh*] The route is generalized, perhaps from reminiscences of Num. xiv. 25, xx. 14 (JE), as Moore suggests. It is now generally held that Kadesh is to be identified with 'Ain Ḳadīs, 50 m. S. of Beer-sheba. Verses 16—18 agree with JE's narrative in Num., according to which the Israelites journeyed straight from Sinai to Kadesh, and *abode in Kadesh* (*v.* 17, Num. xx. 1 b) apparently till the fortieth year of the Exodus (Num. xx. 14, 16). D and P give divergent accounts; see Gray, *Numbers*, p. 260.

wilderness unto the Red Sea, and came to Kadesh; then 17
Israel sent messengers unto the king of Edom, saying, Let
me, I pray thee, pass through thy land: but the king of
Edom hearkened not. And in like manner he sent unto
the king of Moab: but he would not: and Israel abode in
Kadesh. Then he walked through the wilderness, and 18
compassed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and
came by the east side of the land of Moab, and they pitched
on the other side of Arnon; but they came not within the
border of Moab, for Arnon was the border of Moab. And 19
Israel sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, the
king of Heshbon; and Israel said unto him, Let us pass,
we pray thee, through thy land unto my place. But Sihon 20
trusted not Israel to pass through his border: but Sihon
gathered all his people together, and pitched in Jahaz, and
fought against Israel. And the LORD, the God of Israel, 21
delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel,
and they smote them: so Israel possessed all the land of
the Amorites, the inhabitants of that country. And they 22
possessed all the border of the Amorites, from Arnon even
unto Jabbok, and from the wilderness even unto Jordan.

17. Abbreviated from Num. xx. 14—18 JE. Edom lay to the S. and S.E. of Palestine. There is no mention elsewhere of the embassy to Moab.

Let me, I pray thee] The nation as a whole is personified, a not uncommon idiom; cf. *v.* 12, xx. 23, Num. xx. 18 etc. In *v.* 19, Num. xx. 17, 19 the plur. and sing. interchange.

18. *compassed the land of Edom*] Num. xxi. 4 b; cf. Dt. ii. 1.

on the other side of Arnon] Clearly the country *north* of the Arnon, viewed from the march from the south; cf. Num. xxi. 13.

19. Again abbreviated from JE's narrative, Num. xxi. 21—24, which is further expanded in Dt. ii. 26—37.

Sihon...the king of Heshbon] So frequently, e.g. Num. xxi. 26, Dt. ii. 24, 26, 30, iii. 6, xxix. 7, Josh. xii. 5 etc. The site of Sihon's capital is now represented by Hesbān (nearly 3000 ft.), finely placed among the mountains, 16 m. N.E. of the upper end of the Dead Sea, and overlooking Mt Nebo, which is 5 m. to the S.W. In later times Heshbon is referred to as a Moabite city, Is. xv. 4, xvi. 8 f., Jer. xlviii. 2, 34, 45, xlix. 3; it was assigned to Reuben by the Israelites, Josh. xiii. 17 P.

20. *Jahaz*] Num. xxi. 23, Dt. ii. 32; a strong place on the high *table-land* (*mîshor*) of Moab (Jer. xlviii. 21), in the country north of the Arnon given to Reuben (Josh. xiii. 18 P), near Kedēmoth (Josh. l.c.

23 So now the LORD, the God of Israel, hath dispossessed the
Amorites from before his people Israel, and shouldest thou
24 possess them? Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy
god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever the LORD our
God hath dispossessed from before us, them will we possess.
25 And now art thou any thing better than Balak the son of
Zippor, king of Moab? did he ever strive against Israel, or
26 did he ever fight against them? While Israel dwelt in
Heshbon and her [1]towns, and in Aroer and her [1]towns, and

[1] Heb. *daughters.*

xxi. 36 f.), and thus in the S.E. of Sihon's territory, between Dibon and Medebah (Euseb., *Onom.* 264, 96); but the exact site is unknown. Generally it was a Moabite city (Moabite Stone, lines 19, 20, Is. xv. 4, Jer. xlviii. 34).

21. Cf. Num. xxi. 24 a.

24. *Chemosh thy god...the LORD our God*] What Jehovah was to Israel Chemosh was to Moab; Num. xxi. 29, Moab. St. *passim*. Obviously Moabites are in the speaker's mind, not Ammonites, whose national god was Milcom. According to ancient ideas each nation had its own god, whose influence extended over the country where he was worshipped and no further; Mic. iv. 5, cf. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19, Dt. iv. 19 etc.; an Israelite worshipper of Jehovah would not, therefore, deny the divinity of the gods of his neighbours. A belief in the sole Godhead of Jehovah had not yet been reached.

Wilt not thou...giveth thee to possess] Read *Wilt not thou possess* (the territory of) *those whom Chemosh thy god dispossesseth*? omitting *thee*, and thus making the two halves of the verse correspond.

25. *art thou...better than Balak*] Though the king of Ammon is supposed to be addressed, the question really aims at some king of Moab: is he a better man than his predecessor Balak, who did not dare to fight Israel? The verse agrees with Num. xxii.—xxiv., where no mention is made of a war between Moab and Israel; Josh. xxiv. 9 a is probably due to an annotator.

26. *While Israel dwelt*] Rather *When I. settled.* For *her towns* see on i. 27.

Aroer...Arnon] The LXX. reads *Jazer* (cod. A)...*Jordan* (so Vulg.), which looks like the original text. *Jazer* lay on the Ammonite border, Num. xxi. 24 (LXX.), 32, 2 Sam. xxiv. 5, and is associated with Heshbon in Josh. xxi. 39; it suits the present context better than Aroer (now 'Ar'āir) in the extreme S. of Moab. Moreover, since 'Aroer and her towns' were situated on the north side of the Arnon, the words which follow in the present text, 'and in all the cities that are along by the side of Arnon,' add nothing to the description; *Jordan* gives us exactly what is wanted.

in all the cities that are along by the side of Arnon, three hundred years; wherefore did ye not recover them within that time? I therefore have not sinned against thee, but 27
thou doest me wrong to war against me: the LORD, the Judge, be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon. Howbeit the king of the children 28
of Ammon hearkened not unto the words of Jephthah which he sent him.

Then the spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he 29
passed over Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon. And Jephthah vowed a vow unto 30
the LORD, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver the children

three hundred years] The total number of years assigned to the oppressions and to the periods of the Judges in the preceding chapters comes to 319, or, omitting the Ammonite oppression, to 301. The round number 300 seems, therefore, to be calculated upon the basis of the chronological scheme introduced into the book by the editor of the framework. Thus *three hundred years* must have been inserted into the narrative, to the disturbance of the proper sense of the clause which follows: *within that time* is an incorrect rendering; the words mean **at that time** (cf. iii. 29, iv. 4, xii. 6 etc.), i.e. when Israel settled in Heshbon.

27. *the LORD...be judge*] Cf. Gen. xxxi. 53, 1 Sam. xxiv. 12, 15. Even in early Israel Jehovah could be appealed to as the Judge, who in the quarrels of men or nations was known to take the side of justice against unfair aggression. The fundamental difference between Jehovah and the gods of the nations, and His superiority to them, lay in His essentially moral character.

29. An editorial hand has attempted to pick up the thread of the narrative after the long interpolation, *vv.* 12—28. *Then the spirit of the LORD came upon J.* may well have stood originally at the beginning of *v.* 32; for elsewhere the access of the divine spirit takes effect at once in a deed of strength or daring (iii. 10*n.*). *and he passed over Gilead and Manasseh* must refer to Jephthah's efforts to rouse the tribes E. and W. of Jordan (xii. 2); but according to x. 17 the Israelites are already assembled; the reference comes too late here. *and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead*; Jephthah, however, has not left Mizpah, where he made his vow (*vv.* 11, 30). The last clause can only be rendered *he passed over the children of A.*, an incorrect expression; the sentence occurs in its proper place and form in *v.* 32. The poor style of the verse (note the repetitions) betrays its character.

30. *vowed a vow*] The sequel of *v.* 11. It was a solemn vow made deliberately at a sanctuary (*vv.* 35, 36) under stress of circumstances,

31 of Ammon into mine hand, then it shall be, that [1]whatsoever
cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when
I return in peace from the children of Ammon, it shall be
32 the LORD'S, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering. So
Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight
against them; and the LORD delivered them into his hand.
33 And he smote them from Aroer until thou come to Minnith,
even twenty cities, and unto [2]Abel-cheramim, with a very
great slaughter. So the children of Ammon were subdued
before the children of Israel.

[1] Or, *whosoever* [2] That is, *The meadow of vineyards.*

like Jacob's at Bethel Gen. xxviii. 20 f., xxxi. 13 E, Hannah's at Shiloh 1 Sam. i. 11, Absalom's at Hebron 2 Sam. xv. 7 f.

31. *whatsoever...it shall be...I will offer it up*] **whosoever**...**he** *shall be...I will offer* **him** *up*, so LXX., Vulg., Pesh. Jephthah had in his mind a human victim[1]. It is unnecessary to mention the various expedients which have been adopted in order to escape the plain meaning of the words. Nothing is said about Jephthah's rashness; nor are we told that there was anything displeasing to Jehovah in the nature of the vow; the narrative emphasizes in the issue the grief of Jephthah and the pitiful fate of his daughter. At a crisis or under the influence of despair, when ordinary sacrifices seemed unavailing and at all costs the divine help must be secured, Semitic religion had recourse to human sacrifices. Among the Hebrews in the rude, early days such a sacrifice was possible (as here), but in time it was felt to be contrary to the spirit of the religion of Jehovah (Gen. xxii.); the hideous practice revived, however, in the period of Ahaz and Manasseh (2 Kings xvi. 3, xvii. 17, xxi. 6 etc., Mic. vi. 7), and was denounced by the prophets (Jer. vii. 31, xix. 5 etc., Ezek. xvi. 20 f., xxiii. 39) and forbidden by the law (Dt. xii. 31, xviii. 10, Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 2). Among the neighbouring peoples, e.g. the Moabites (2 Kings iii. 27), the Canaanites or Phoenicians (Philo Bybl., *Fragm. Hist. Gr.* iii. 570; Porphyry, *de Abstin.* ii. 56 etc.), the Babylonians in Samaria (2 Kings xvii. 31), the practice continued. In 1 Sam. xv. 33, 2 Sam. xxi. 1—9 the reference is not to human sacrifice, but to a religious execution or herem. Recent excavations in Palestine (e.g. at Gezer) have revealed many remains of human sacrifices; see Stanley A. Cook, *Religion of Ancient Palestine*, pp. 38 ff.

33. *Aroer*] Probably not the Aroer of *v.* 26, but another place of the same name E. of Rabbath-ammon, Josh. xiii. 25, on the Ammonite border. *Minnith* is identified by Eusebius (*Onom. Sacr.* 280, 44;

[1] Early Arabian religion before Mohammed furnishes a parallel: "Al-Mundhir [king of al-Ḥirah] had made a vow that on a certain day in each year he would sacrifice the first person he saw; 'Abīd came in sight on the unlucky day, and was accordingly killed, and the altar smeared with his blood." Lyall, *Ancient Arabian Poetry*, p. xxviii, cf. p. xxvii.

And Jephthah came to Mizpah unto his house, and, behold, 34
his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with
dances: and she was his only child; beside her he had
neither son nor daughter. And it came to pass, when he 35
saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my
daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one
of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto
the LORD, and I cannot go back. And she said unto him, 36
My father, thou hast opened thy mouth unto the LORD; do
unto me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy
mouth; forasmuch as the LORD hath taken vengeance for
thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon.
And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for 37
me: let me alone for two months, that I may depart and
go down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and
my companions. And he said, Go. And he sent her away 38

140, 3) with Maanith, 4 rom. miles from Heshbon, on the way to Philadelphia (Rabbath-ammon). *Abel-cherāmim* according to *Onom. Sacr.* 225, 5; 96, 10 = Abel, 6 or 7 miles from Philadelphia. The two last identifications are uncertain. The direction of the campaign is twice mentioned (*until thou come...and unto*); the *twenty cities* come in awkwardly between the two places; probably the text has received additions.

were subdued] See iii. 30 *n.*

34. *his daughter...with timbrels and with dances*] For women celebrating a victory cf. Ex. xv. 20, 1 Sam. xviii. 6, Ps. lxviii. 11. The last half of the verse is phrased with much beauty, lost in the translation.

35. *thou hast brought me very low*] **thou hast struck me down utterly**: the same verb as in v. 27 (*he bowed*).

thou art one of them that trouble me] The first pron. is emphatic; 'thou, my beloved, dost appear in the character of my worst enemy.' For the Hebr. idiom (*beth essentiae*) see Ps. liv. 4 [Heb. 6], cxviii. 7. *Trouble* is a feeble equivalent for the strong word in the original, which occurs only under circumstances which arouse unusual passion; see Gen. xxxiv. 30, Josh. vii. 25, 26, 1 Sam. xiv. 29, 1 Kings xviii. 17, 18. The Versions give a free paraphrase of the two words *bowed down*, *trouble me* (*kara'*, *'akar*), but do not necessarily presuppose a different text.

I have opened my mouth] lit. *opened wide*, *v.* 36, of a solemn utterance; cf. Ps. lxvi. 13, 14.

36. The daughter has her share of the hero's blood, and a larger share of the heroic temper: 'My God, my land, my father'! Tennyson, 'A Dream of Fair Women.'

37. *and go down upon the mountains*] A slight emendation (*weradhti*

for two months: and she departed, she and her companions,
39 and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. And it
came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned
unto her father, who did with her according to his vow
which he had vowed: and she had not known man. And
40 it was [1]a custom in Israel, that the daughters of Israel went
yearly to [2]celebrate the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite
four days in a year.

[1] Or, *an ordinance* [2] Or, *lament*

for *weyaradhti*) improves the sense: *and roam* or *wander restlessly*; cf. Jer. ii. 31 ('we roam at large').

bewail my virginity] To be neither wife nor mother was considered a punishment and a reproach: cf. Gen. xvi. 1—5, xxx. 23, 1 Sam. i. 10, 11, 15, Is. iv. 1, Lk. i. 25. The ancient Greeks felt similarly[1].

39. *who did with her according to his vow*] The language is marked by a fine reserve, but the plain sense of it is that Jephthah offered the tragic sacrifice. Early Jewish interpretation took it to mean this; Talm. *Ta'anith* 4 a (where the sacrifice is compared with that of Isaac and of Mesha's son); Midrash *Bereshith Rab.* § 60; Jos., *Ant.* v. 7, 10. The same view was adopted by the Christian Fathers and Church writers (e.g. St Augustine, *Opera*, t. iii. 812 'procul dubio nihil aliud quam hominem cogitabit'; St Ambrose, *Op.* t. ii. 177, 178 and 281, 282; St Chrysostom, *Op.* t. ii. 147). In the Middle Ages, however, the natural meaning of the words was explained away, first by the Jewish commentators (e.g. by Ḳimḥi *in loc.* 'he made a house for her and brought her into it, and she was there separated from mankind and from the ways of the world'), and following them by Christian interpreters. More recently it has been suggested that Jephthah dedicated the maiden to Jehovah as a virgin priestess or vestal in the local sanctuary; cf. Code of Ḥammurabi, § 181, which alleges the case of a father dedicating a votary to a god; Benzinger, *Hebr. Arch.*[2] (1907), 360.

and she had not known man] **she being a virgin** (for the Hebr. idiom see Driver, *Tenses*, § 159). The sacrifice, therefore, was all the greater; her father's race perished with her. Similarly in early Greek myths the human victim is nearly always a virgin; see Murray, *Rise of the Gk. Epic*, 121—123. Cf. Virgil, *Aen.* x. 518—520 (note *juvenes*).

40. *And it was*] *And it* **became**, altering the verb from fem. to masc. The verse is wrongly divided. For *went* render **used to go** (frequentative).

to celebrate] So translated to agree with v. 11 (*rehearse*), the only other place where the word occurs: the Versions give *to lament*. In both places the rendering is merely inferred from the context. There is no sufficient reason to doubt that Jephthah's sacrifice was an actual

[1] See Livingstone, *The Greek Genius* (1912), p. 83 f.

And the men of Ephraim were gathered together, and 12
passed [1]northward; and they said unto Jephthah, Wherefore
passedst thou over to fight against the children of Ammon,
and didst not call us to go with thee? we will burn thine
house upon thee with fire. And Jephthah said unto them, 2
I and my people were at great strife with the children of
Ammon; and when I called you, ye saved me not out of

[1] Or, *to Zaphon*

incident in history; but the yearly festival which commemorated his daughter's fate may have had a remoter origin. It is not unlikely that the incident was associated in the course of time with a primitive myth; for there are traces elsewhere of human sacrifices being connected with an annual mourning for the death of a god. In the parallel story of Iphigenia the heroine is really a form of an early goddess identified with Artemis. The present narrative suggests to some scholars reminiscences of Tammuz-Ishtar worship, which celebrated the annual death and revival of the divinity. In later times the daughter of Jephthah was worshipped by the Samaritans in Sichem as Korē, the heavenly virgin; Epiphanius, *adv. Haeres.* iii. 2, 1055. A. Jeremias, *Das A.T. im Lichte d. Alten Orients*[2], p. 478.

Ch. **xii. 1—6.** *Jephthah's conflict with the men of Ephraim.*

A sequel of the Ammonite war. Jephthah had returned to his house (xi. 34), two months at least had passed (xi. 39), the Gileadite forces had dispersed (implied by xii. 4), when the arrogant and jealous temper of the Ephraimites broke out, as formerly after Gideon's victory (viii. 1—3), but this time without a shadow of pretext. The narrative *vv.* 1—6 has been regarded as a mere replica of viii. 1—3, which it certainly resembles; but the situation here is different, and the marked originality of the incident in *vv.* 5, 6 forbids us to question the historical character of the present section.

1. *northward*] The wrong direction; so follow marg. **to Zaphon,** a place on the E. of Jordan near Succoth, Josh. xiii. 27, and not far from the river; Jos., *Ant.* xiii. 12, 5 (Asophon).

and didst not call us] Untrue, see *v.* 2. The western Ephraimites had no concern of their own with an Ammonite invasion on the E. of Jordan; their alleged grievance was a piece of pretension. For the threat cf. ix. 49, 52, xiv. 15, xv. 6.

2. *were at great strife with the children of Ammon*] lit. 'I was at strife, I and my people, and the children of A. exceedingly.' Supply **afflicted me** in the last clause, with LXX. cod. A, Luc. etc., Syro-Hex. The verb (*'innūnī*) was accidentally omitted, probably owing to its resemblance to *'Ammon.* Jephthah identifies himself with his people, as in xi. 12.

when I called you] The summons is not mentioned in ch. xi., but it may be implied in xi. 29; see note.

3 their hand. And when I saw that ye saved me not, I put
my life in my hand, and passed over against the children
of Ammon, and the LORD delivered them into my hand:
wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day, to fight
4 against me? Then Jephthah gathered together all the men
of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim: and the men of Gilead
smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye are fugitives of
Ephraim, ye Gileadites, in the midst of Ephraim, *and* in the
5 midst of Manasseh. And the Gileadites took the fords of
Jordan [1]against the Ephraimites: and it was so, that when
any of the fugitives of Ephraim said, Let me go over, the
6 men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If
he said, Nay; then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth;

[1] Or, *toward Ephraim*

3. *that* **thou wast not going to save** *me*] Or omit *thou*, and render *that there was none to save*, LXX. cod. A, Luc. Cf. Is. lxiii. 5.

I put my life in my hand] Cf. 1 Sam. xix. 5, xxviii. 21, Job xiii. 14, Ps. cxix. 109.

4. *because they said...Manasseh*] These words, which make no sense where they stand, and are omitted by some MSS. of the LXX. and marked with an asterisk in Syro-Hex., probably belonged in part to *v.* 6 '...and slew him at the fords of Jordan, *for they said, Ye are fugitives of Ephraim.*' The words in italics may have been left out by a copyist, and then written on the margin, whence they were restored to the text, but in the wrong place. Afterwards *Gilead is in the midst of E., in the midst of M.* (so the text runs) was added as a gloss on the previous sentence which became unintelligible in its new position.

5. *took the fords*] Cf. iii. 28, vii. 24. Render *against* (dat. incommodi) rather than *toward* (marg.) in these passages.

6. *Shibboleth...Sibboleth*] An interesting proof of the difference in dialect between the eastern and western tribes. By confusion of sounds *shibbōleth* (שִׁבֹּלֶת) would become *sibbōleth* (סִבֹּלֶת), and then *sibbōleth* (סִבֹּלֶת, the form here); though liable to confusion in pronunciation, the letters *shin* (ש) and *sāmekh* (ס) are etymologically quite distinct. The word means 'ear of grain' (Gen. xli. 5 ff., Is. xvii. 5 etc., Assyr. *šubultu*) or 'flood,' 'stream' (Is. xxvii. 12; Ps. lxix. 2, 15), in the latter sense only in late writings; in this early narrative it would probably have been understood to mean 'ear[1].' A modern parallel is to be found in Doughty, *Arabia Deserta* i. p. 155: "A battalion of

[1] The 'ear of wheat' was an ancient symbol of Ishtar, the goddess of heaven; and in later astronomy the Aramaic *shebelta* was the name of the Virgo Spicifera in the Zodiac: possibly, therefore, popular religious associations may have had something to do with the choice of the test word, as well as its tell-tale sibilant. See Winckler, *Gesch. Isr.* ii. 277 f.; *KAT.*[3], 428; A. Jeremias, *Das A.T. im Lichte des Alt. Or.*[2], 109.

and he said Sibboleth; for he could not frame to pronounce it right; then they laid hold on him, and slew him at the fords of Jordan: and there fell at that time of Ephraim forty and two thousand.

And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died 7
Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in *one of* the cities of Gilead.

And after him Ibzan of Beth-lehem judged Israel. And 8
he had thirty sons, and thirty daughters he sent abroad, and 9
thirty daughters he brought in from abroad for his sons. And he judged Israel seven years. And Ibzan died, and 10
was buried at Beth-lehem.

And after him Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel; and he 11

Ibrahîm Pasha's troops had been closed in and disarmed by the redoubtable Druses in the *Léja*. The Druses coming on to cut them in pieces, a certain Damascene soldier among them cried out, 'Aha! neighbours, grant protection at least to the Shwâm (Syrians), which are children of the same soil as you.' It was answered, They would spare them if they could discern them. 'Let me alone for that,' said the Damascene;—and if they caused the soldiers to pass one by one he would discern them. It was granted, and he challenged them thus, '*Ragal*, O man, say *Gamel*!' Every Syrian answered *Jemel*; and in this manner he saved his countrymen and the Damascenes."

could not frame] A doubtful rendering. For *yākīn* (impf.) read *yākōl* (perf.) **was not able**; so Syr., cf. Vulg. non valens.

forty and two thousand] Obviously an exaggeration. Cf. viii. 10 *n.*

7. The story of Jephthah is brought to a close with the formula which is used of the Minor Judges, *vv.* 8—15, x. 2—5.

was buried in one of *the cities of Gilead*] The text has *in the cities of G.*! Can this mean that Jephthah was buried somewhere or other in Gilead? The vagueness of the expression is supposed to be an indication of the vaguely historical character of the whole story (Meyer, *Die Israeliten*, p. 535). Probably, however, the text is incorrect. The LXX. cod. B reads 'in his city in G.', cod. A 'in his city G.'; Vulg. in civitate sua Galaad. Some cursive MSS. of LXX. read 'in his city in Sephe Gilead,' cf. Jos., *Ant.* v. 7, 12 'in Sebee of G.'; this suggests that the text originally ran **in his city, in Mizpeh of G.**, cf. viii. 27, xi. 29. The rabbis are driven to explain 'limb after limb fell off his body and was buried each in a different place,' Midrash Rabba *Levit.* § 37, *Bereshith* § 60.

8—15. *The three last Minor Judges.*

See introduction to ch. x.

8. *Ibzan*] His tribe or family is not mentioned. His city was probably not the Beth-lehem in Judah, because the Bk of Judges is not

12 judged Israel ten years. And Elon the Zebulunite died,
and was buried in Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.
13 And after him Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite
14 judged Israel. And he had forty sons and thirty sons' sons,
that rode on threescore and ten ass colts: and he judged
15 Israel eight years. And Abdon the son of Hillel the
Pirathonite died, and was buried in Pirathon in the land of
Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.

concerned with Judah; but the Beth-lehem in Zebulun (Josh. xix. 15), now Bēt-laḥm, 7 m. N.W. of Nazareth.

12. *Elon...Aijalon*] Nothing here but a name and a burying-place. Both probably should be pronounced alike, as in the LXX., for the consonants are practically identical; and the form should be Elon, this being the name of one of the 'sons,' i.e. families, of Zebulun, Gen. xlvi. 14, Num. xxvi. 26. The home of the clan was called by the name of the clan; and there the grave was shewn. See on x. 2. In these notices of the Minor Judges have we traditions of individuals or of clans? Partly, perhaps, of the one and partly of the other. The names are clan-names; the 'sons' and 'daughters' (x. 4, xii. 9, 14) may represent clan developments and alliances; on the other hand the judgeship and the burying-place seem to preserve the memory of an individual.

13. *Abdon...the Pirathonite*] Pir'athon (2 Sam. xxiii. 30 etc.) prob. = Far'atā, situated on a high rock a little to the S.W. of Nāblus; if this is correct, Abdon belonged to an Ephraimite family. In 1 Chr. viii. 23 Abdon is a Benjamite; but the name was a common one.

15. *in the land of Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites*] The Amalekites, however, were settled not in Ephraim, but in the Negeb, S. of Judah. It is true that *ch.* v. 14 brings Ephraim into connexion with Amalek, but the text is too uncertain (see note *in loc.*) to be used in support of the present passage. Moore (*Polychr. Bible*) notices that a group of MSS. of LXX. read 'in the hill country of Ephraim, in the land of Sellēm,' cf. 1 Sam. ix. 4, where the Saaleim of LXX. cod. A. = the Hebr. Shaālim. Since there is no way of accounting for the reading of these MSS. by any confusion of letters, it may well be that they have preserved the true text here: *in the hill country of E., in the land of Shaālim.*

Ch. xiii. 1—xvi. 31. *The story of Samson.*

Samson's birth, xiii.; his marriage at Timnah and exploits against the Philistines, xiv.—xv.; his adventures at Gaza, followed by his intercourse with Delilah—the cause of his ruin and death, xvi. Unlike the preceding chapters, the present narrative is not constructed from various sources, though ch. xiv. has undergone revision (*vv.* 3—6, 8, 10, 11), and in a less degree ch. xiii. (*vv.* 19, 23); it is reasonable to suppose that the account of Samson's birth, like that of Samuel's birth and consecration, came into existence later than the other stories, after

the hero had become famous. To the Deuteronomic editor are due the brief additions (xiii. 1, xv. 20, xvi. 31 b) which give to Samson the character of a Judge, as being a foremost champion against the enemies of God. Those who trace in Judges the continuation of the Pentateuchal documents assign these chapters to J; at any rate they belong to the oldest stratum of the book, and come from the heart of old Israelite life. Samson is just the hero whom the country people would love; his feats of strength, his success with women, his doughty deeds, his tricks, his grim humour, his tragic end, lived on the lips of story-tellers before they were written down; it is folk-lore undisguised, innocent of all effort to be reflective or edifying. Samson is no leader of men, like Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah; he does nothing to rally his tribesmen against a common enemy; he acts simply on his own account. The story has its religious features, quite in keeping with its popular character; the hero wears his hair long in token of a vow of consecration (xiii. 5, 7, xvi. 17); when he desires to put forth his strength the spirit of Jehovah comes mightily upon him (xiii. 25, xiv. 6, 19); twice in desperate straits he cries to Jehovah (xv. 18, xvi. 28). The religious element comes out most clearly in ch. xiii., which, as noted above, may be later in origin than chs. xiv.—xvi.

It was the period of the Philistine domination (xiv. 4, xv. 11 f.). The southern Israelites appear to have become more or less reconciled to their loss of independence; they took advantage of the rights of *connubium* and *commercium* (xiv. 1, 3, 10 f., xvi. 1); and though the story implies that the Philistines were regarded as natural enemies (xiv. 4), nothing like a general rising was in contemplation; in fact the Judaeans behaved as if they cared more for the favour of their overlords than for the rescue of their fellow-countryman (xv. 11—13). On the Philistine side we hear of no hostile movement; Samson's exploits were private acts of aggression; and when the Philistines were finally roused, it was to retaliate not upon the Israelites but upon their arch-enemy (xv. 9, 10). Thus the story of Samson, and probably that of Shamgar too (see on iii. 31), belongs to the period which immediately precedes the actively hostile advance of the Philistines recorded in 1 Samuel. Samson has been compared to one of the Greek heroes, whose deeds of prowess formed the prelude to a war of independence.

The name of the hero (*Shimshon* = 'solar,' from *shemesh* = 'sun') and some of his feats and characteristics have led many to think that the stories grew out of a solar myth, and that Samson was originally a Canaanite sun-god. The theory can be made to look plausible[1]. Even early commentators thought of a comparison with Herakles, and attempts have been made to discover twelve 'labours.' It is only an artificial ingenuity, however, which can apply in detail the theory of a solar myth. The stories are more naturally explained as popular tales or folk-lore, coloured here and there, it may be granted, by solar mythology, e.g. xv. 4, 5, xvi. 13. A connexion between the story of Samson

[1] E.g. recently by Ed. Meyer, *Die Israeliten*, p. 527 f., and, with some modifications, by Stahn, *Die Simson-Sage*, 1908.

13 And the children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.

and the Babylonian Gilgămesh Epic is maintained by several modern scholars (e.g. Jastrow, *Rel. of Babyl. and Assyr.* (1898), 515 f.; Schrader, *KAT.*[3], 582; A. Jeremias, *Das A. T. im Lichte d. Alt. Or.*[2] 1906, 482); but when closely examined the alleged resemblances are questionable. The scene of a hero mastering a lion represented on some ancient Bab. seal-cylinders (see A. Jeremias, l.c. 266 f., Ball, *Light from the East*, 44 f.) does not necessarily refer to the exploits of Gilgămesh, and only remotely illustrates those of Samson.

Ch. xiii. *Samson's birth.*

1. *the Philistines*] The Dtc. compiler treats the age of Samson on the principle of iii. 7 f., which has been illustrated in the foregoing narratives (iii. 7—11, 12—15, iv. 1—3, vi. 1—7, x. 6—8); but no hostile invasion is mentioned in xiii.—xvi.; while the Philistine domination lasted to the time of David, much longer than 40 years.

The Philistines are probably to be identified with the *Purasati*, who, with other non-Semitic tribes from southern Asia Minor and the Aegean islands, are first mentioned in the Egyptian inscriptions of Ramses III (*circ.* 1198—1167 B.C.). At the beginning of the xiith century these 'peoples of the sea' swept down upon Upper Syria and S.W. Canaan; they were twice defeated by the Pharaoh, but he did not succeed in driving them all out of the country. The Philistines settled on the coast between Carmel and Gaza, and in course of time formed a federal state governed by five *lords* (*serānim*, iii. 3, xvi. 5 ff., Josh. xiii. 3, 1 Sam. vi. 17 f.); a kindred tribe, the Cherēthites (translated *Cretans*[1] by LXX. in Zeph. ii. 5, Ezek. xxv. 16), found a home in the Negeb, 1 Sam. xxx. 14. At the period of the Samson story the Philistines not only held the maritime plain and the Shephēlah, but had made themselves masters of the inland districts belonging to the Israelites; in the period which follows they pushed their conquests further E. and N., and it was to resist these aggressions that the Hebrew monarchy was founded. The foreign origin of the Philistines is recognized by O.T. tradition. Thus in Judg. and Sam. they are called 'the uncircumcised,' and their original home is said to have been Caphtor (Am. ix. 7 LXX. Cappadocia, Jer. xlvii. 4, cf. Dt. ii. 23), which may be the equivalent of *Kefto*, the ancient Egyptian name for the western quarter of the world, especially perhaps Cilicia; the civilization which they brought with them no doubt belonged to the early Aegean type[2]. But though foreigners

[1] The identification is by no means certain, though recent opinion tends to recognize a connexion between the Philistines and Crete; see Evans, *Scripta Minoa* (1909), pp. 77 ff.

[2] In the LXX., Judg. and elsewhere, the Philistines are usually called οἱ ἀλλόφυλοι *the foreigners*; but in Judg. x. 6, 7, 11, xiii. 1, 5, xiv. 2 cod. B gives Φυλιστιείμ, cod. A οἱ ἀλλόφυλοι. The latter rendering is probably due, not to

And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of 2
the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was

by race and civilization, they seem to have adopted the language and religion of the natives whom they conquered. The names of persons and places in Philistia are Canaanite (except perhaps *Achish*, and *serānim* above); the gods whom they worshipped, Dagon (xvi. 23 f., 1 Sam. v.), Ashtart (1 Sam. xxxi. 10), Baal-zebub (2 Kings i. 2 f.), are Canaanite too; see also Herod. i. 105. Curiously enough, the district inhabited by these foreign invaders (Hebr. *Pelesheth*) gave its name through Greek influence to the whole country, Παλαιστίνη (Herod. ii. 104, vii. 89), Palestine. The mention of the Philistines in the stories of the patriarchs, Gen. xxi. 22 ff. E, xxvi. J, and in Ex. xiii. 17, xv. 14, is an anachronism; for the Amarna tablets (*circ.* 1400 B.C.) mention the country and cities afterwards held by the Philistines as in Canaanite possession.

2. *Zorah*] *v.* 25, xvi. 31, xviii. 2, 8, 11, usually mentioned with Eshtaol; in Josh. xix. 41 counted as Danite, in *ib.* xv. 33 as belonging to Judah, which later on absorbed the Danite settlements in the south; re-inhabited after the exile, Neh. xi. 29. Zorah was an ancient Canaanite town, and is referred to in the Amarna Letters (173, 21) along with Aijalon. The name is preserved in the modern Ṣar'a, 15 m. west of Jerusalem. The situation of the town just opposite Beth-shemesh (prob. = Mt Heres i. 35) exposed it to Philistine influences.

of the family of the Danites...Manoah] The Danites were a small tribe, hence 'family' is used here and in xviii. 2, 11, 19, though 'tribe' also occurs in xviii. 1, 19. Originally they attempted to settle in the southern lowland, but the Amorites forced them into the neighbouring hill country (i. 34 f.), a district which afterwards passed into the possession of Judah. From their southern settlements the Danites, probably owing to Canaanite or Philistine pressure, migrated to the north, and established themselves at Laish or Leshem-Dan, near the sources of the Jordan (xviii. 2, 11 ff., 27 ff.; Josh. xix. 47). The account of this migration, though given at the end of Judges, probably belongs to the period of ch. i. The Danites were already settled in their northern home at the time of Deborah (v. 17). But ch. xviii. does not say that the entire tribe migrated; some families remained behind in the south, as the present narrative implies. Manoah must have been closely connected with the Manaḥathites of Zorah, a family which traced its origin to the Calebite clans (1 Chr. ii. 52—54), and had affinities both with the Horites of Seir (Gen. xxxvi. 23 P) and with Judah (1 Chr. iv. 1). This Horite family lived in Zorah and was absorbed into the mixed tribe of Dan: such seems to be the conclusion suggested by the genealogies. Manoah thus becomes the eponymous ancestor of the family which bore his name, and in popular tradition

ancient tradition, but to the fact that at the time when the Gk. Version was made the population of the old Philistine country had become thoroughly Hellenized. In Is. ix. 12 Ἕλληνες *Greeks* actually appears for the *Philistines* of the Hebr. text.

3 barren, and bare not. And the angel of the LORD appeared
unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art
barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear
4 a son. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink no
5 wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: for,
lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall
come upon his head: for the child shall be a [1]Nazirite unto

[1] See Num. vi. 2.

Samson was known as his 'son,' just as Jephthah is called the 'son' of Gilead in xi. 1.

was barren, and bare not] Cf. Sarah Gen. xi. 30, Hannah 1 Sam. i. 2, Elisabeth St Luke i. 7. The child in such cases was a special gift of God, and marked out for a special career.

3. *the angel of the LORD*] i.e. Jehovah Himself in manifestation; see on ii. 1. The appearance of the Angel betokens the announcement of a deliverer, as in vi. 12; cf. St Luke i. 11, 15 ff., 31 ff., St Mat. i. 20 f.

4. The mother during the time of pregnancy is to observe certain ceremonial restrictions (*vv.* 7, 14); she is to live in a state of consecration, in order that her child may be consecrated from the very moment of conception. The two prohibitions are classed together, apparently on the principle that to partake of anything fermented or putrified renders a person unfit for consecration to the Deity[1]. Thus priests during their service were not allowed to drink wine (Lev. x. 9, Ezek. xliv. 21); while unclean foods, i.e. carrion (Ex. xxii. 31, Lev. vii. 24, Dt. xiv. 21) and tabooed animals (Lev. xi. 2—23, Dt. xiv. 3—20) were forbidden, the former because it had begun to decompose, the latter because in accordance with ancient ideas and custom they could not be used for sacrifice or for food. The restrictions are laid upon the mother; nothing is said about the child observing them. Samson did not consider himself bound to abstain from wine (see below); the second prohibition was not distinctive of the Nazirite consecration.

5. *thou shalt conceive*] The present in Gen. xvi. 11 RV. and Is. vii. 14 RVm.; the future is more suitable here.

a Nazirite unto God] lit. *one separated unto God*; this, the full term, came to be abbreviated *nāzîr*, i.e. *separated, devoted, a Nazirite*. It is to be noticed that (1) the consecration took effect from birth; it was not voluntary, but due to the call of God, in this respect resembling the case of the prophets, Jer. i. 5, Is. xliv. 2; (2) it was life-long and not temporary; (3) the special sign of consecration was the unshorn hair, *no razor shall come upon his head*, cf. xvi. 17, 1 Sam. i. 11; this seems

[1] See Robertson Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*, 203 f., 367, 465. Frazer, *Golden Bough* i. 183—185, suggests that the ultimate reason for abstinence from intoxicating wine was the idea that 'whoever drinks wine drinks the blood, and so receives into himself the soul or spirit of the god of the vine.' Such intercourse with a spirit alien to Jehovah would be regarded by a Hebrew as unlawful. The Nazirite abstinence from wine seems to have been determined by other reasons, as suggested above; when it came into practice the original meaning of the prohibition was lost.

God from the womb: and he shall begin to save Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the woman came 6
and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me,

to have been the one essential characteristic; and (4) the object or task of the person thus devoted was to wage war and effect a deliverance. The connexion between (3) and (4) is illustrated by the custom of Arab warriors to wear the hair long when they vowed inveterate war, probably too by the long hair of the chiefs in Deborah's Song (see on v. 2). In old Israel the Nazirite was no doubt a familiar figure; but besides Samson, the only other and not quite certain example is Samuel (1 Sam. i. 11), though he is not called a Nazirite till Ecclus. xlvi. 13 (in the Hebr., not in the Gk. text), and in Talmudic tradition (*Nazir* 66 a 'Samuel was a Nazirite according to the teaching of R. Naharaï'). There was nothing ascetic about a Nazirite in the early days, as the story of Samson proves (xiv. 10); abstinence from wine did not become a mark of this type of devotee till a later time (Am. ii. 12), and then probably as a protest against Canaanite habits (cf. the Rechabites, Jer. xxxv. 9 ff.). What was probably a later development still appears in the detailed law of the Nazirite in Numbers vi.; there abstinence from wine has become the principal feature; the hair is treated as a hair-offering; instead of preserving it unshorn, the Nazirite is to shave when the period of the vow is over; the vow itself is not life-long but temporary and voluntary; and contact with a dead body is strictly forbidden, a prohibition which cannot have existed in the early days (Jud. xiv. 19, xv. 8, 15; 1 Sam. xv. 33). The obvious differences between Nazirites of Samson's type and those of the type laid down in the law formed a topic of discussion among the Rabbis (Talmud B. *Nazir* 4 a, b). After the Exile temporary Nazirites were numerous down to the fall of Jerusalem (1 Macc. iii. 49; Jos., *Ant.* xix. 6, 1, *Wars* ii. 15, 1; Acts xxi. 23 ff.).

The treatment of the hair, whether preserved unshorn or offered as a sacrifice, is based upon a widely spread and primitive belief that the hair is a part of a man's self; if it is never shorn, his strength is undiminished, he is intact; if it is shorn and offered at the sanctuary, it is in a measure an offering of oneself[1].

begin to save Israel...the Philistines] In chs. xiv.—xvi., however, we find not a work of national deliverance, but intermittent feats of private revenge or daring. The view of Samson's history indicated by this remark shews that ch. xiii. must be somewhat later than xiv.—xvi. It is doubtful whether *begin* implies that Samson was regarded as the forerunner of Samuel and Saul in the struggle against the Philistines (Wellhausen, *Composition d. Hex.*, p. 231; S. A. Cook, *Notes on O.T. Hist.*, p. 34); the word probably means no more than 'shall be the first to,' as in x. 18.

6. *A man of God*] An inspired man; the phrase is used of a prophet,

[1] See Gray, *Journ. of Theol. Studies* i. 201–211 (1900) and *Numbers* 57 ff. (1903) Frazer, *Golden Bough* i. 193—207; Rob. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*, 314 f., 462 ff.

and his countenance was like the countenance of the angel of God, very terrible; and I asked him not whence he was,
7 neither told he me his name: but he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazirite unto God from the womb to the
8 day of his death. Then Manoah intreated the LORD, and said, Oh Lord, I pray thee, let the man of God whom thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall
9 do unto the child that shall be born. And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her
10 husband was not with her. And the woman made haste, and ran, and told her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the *other* day.
11 And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest
12 unto the woman? And he said, I am. And Manoah said, [1]Now let thy words come to pass: what shall be the [2]manner

[1] Or, *Now when thy words come to pass, what &c.* [2] Or, *ordering*

Dt. xxxiii. 1; 1 Sam. ii. 27, ix. 6—8; 1 Kings xii. 22 etc. Here the man of God seemed to be more than human.

and I asked him not] A strange visitor is first asked whence he comes (hence LXX. cod. A and Vulg. omit the negative), and then he is expected to give his name. Such is the rule of Eastern manners; the reticence on both sides in the present case is noted as unusual.

9. *unto the woman*] In response to Manoah's prayer the divine Messenger comes not to him, but to his wife; the important thing is not 'what we shall do unto the child,' but what the mother shall do to ensure the consecration of her offspring. Hence no reply is given in *v.* 14 to the latter part of Manoah's request.

in the field] at some little distance from home. Was it at the sanctuary where the rock-altar (*vv.* 19, 20) stood?

12. *Now let thy words come to pass*] The marg. is to be preferred; for a conditional clause without the conditional particle in Hebrew cf. Num. xii. 14, and see Driver, *Tenses*, § 155. To relieve the obscurity, it is proposed to read *'eth* for *'attah*, 'at the time when' (König, *Syntax*, § 385 k), but this is a rather poetical and late construction, Dt. xxxii. 35, Job vi. 17 etc.

the manner] i.e. what *description* of child shall he be? cf. 2 Kings i. 7. By *his work* is meant *business, occupation*, cf. Gen. xlvi. 33, 1 Sam. xxv. 2 RVm. Cf. St Luke i. 66.

of the child, and [1]*what shall be* his work? And the angel 13
of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the
woman let her beware. She may not eat of any thing that 14
cometh of the [2]vine, neither let her drink wine or strong
drink, nor eat any unclean thing; all that I commanded her
let her observe. And Manoah said unto the angel of the 15
LORD, I pray thee, let us detain thee, that we may make
ready a kid for thee. And the angel of the LORD said unto 16
Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy
bread: and if thou wilt make ready a burnt offering, thou
must offer it unto the LORD. For Manoah knew not that
he was the angel of the LORD. And Manoah said unto the 17
angel of the LORD, What is thy name, that when thy words
come to pass we may do thee honour? And the angel of 18
the LORD said unto him, Wherefore askest thou after my

[1] Or, how *shall we do unto him* [2] Or, *grape-vine* See Num. vi. 4.

14. *eat...of the vine*] i.e. fresh or dried grapes, Num. vi. 3, 1 Sam. xxv. 18, Jer. xxxi. 29 f. etc. Not merely intoxicants, but anything to do with the vine is forbidden, for the reason suggested on *v.* 4; cf. the prohibition laid upon the Roman Flamen Dialis, who was not allowed even to walk under a trellised vine (Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.*, 112). Similarly the Rechabites not only eschewed wine but planted no vineyards; their abstinence, however, was a protest in favour of nomadic as against settled life, Jer. xxxv. 6—9. See further *NSI.*, p. 305.

15. *that we may make ready a kid for thee*] The prep. has a pregnant sense: 'prepare a meal and set it *before thee*'; cf. vi. 19 and Gen. xviii. 6—8. The words might mean *offer a kid in thy presence*; but under the circumstances this rendering is not probable.

16. *I will not eat of thy bread*] in the general sense of *food*; cf. Gen. iii. 19, xlvii. 12, 1 Sam. xiv. 24, Ps. cxxxvi. 25. Note the advance in religious ideas: in Gen. xviii. 8 the Angels eat the meal which Abraham provides; in ch. vi. 18 ff. Gideon is allowed to prepare and cook a meal, but it is consumed by fire, not by the Angel; here the very notion of a meal is repelled (cf. Tobit xii. 19); if anything is to be presented it must be a burnt offering, and offered to Jehovah. The clause *For M. knew not* etc. would come more suitably at the end of *v.* 15.

17. Still uncertain what to think, Manoah puts a direct question. *may do thee honour* as a prophet whose *word* (Hebr. marg.) comes true; cf. Num. xxii. 17, 37, 1 Sam. ix. 6.

18. *Wherefore...my name*] The same words in Gen. xxxii. 29. Manoah's question is not answered, for to reveal the name is to reveal the essential nature and attributes, Ex. iii. 15, xxxiv. 5—7; cf. Gen.

19 name, seeing it is [1]wonderful? So Manoah took the kid
with the meal offering, and offered it upon the rock unto
the LORD: and *the angel* did wondrously, and Manoah and
20 his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame
went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of

[1] Or, *secret*

xxvii. 36, 1 Sam. xxv. 25, Ruth i. 20. The secret was to be disclosed, but only after an act of obedient homage; cf. St John vii. 17.

wonderful] hard to be understood, not *secret* (marg.): prophets use the word to describe God's dealings with His people, Ex. xv. 11; Is. xxv. 1, xxix. 14 etc. The divine Name is inscrutable, like the divine action, Ps. cxxxix. 6.

19. *offered it upon the rock*] i.e. the rock which formed *the altar* (*v.* 20), and lay close at hand. Such an altar, hewn out of the living rock and reached by steps leading to a platform, actually exists near Ṣar'a (Zorah), and may have been in the writer's mind; see the illustration in Driver, *Schweich Lectures* (1909), 66, based on Schick, *ZDPV.* x. (1887), 140 f., who first gave details of the discovery. The surface of the altar itself is almost covered with cup-shaped depressions connected in many cases by shallow channels. These hollows look as if they were intended to receive liquid offerings, and certainly there is little room left on the surface for a burnt sacrifice. Hence Kittel, *Studien z. Hebr. Archäol.* (1908), 97—108, concludes that the altar was primarily a table for a meal offering, and that its use as a hearth for a burnt offering marks the difference between Israelite and pre-Israelite practice. Jehovah would not receive a meal like a Canaanite god; He does not inhabit the sacred stone or tree; His offerings must be consumed by fire which rises to the heaven where He dwells. Kittel works out suggestively the theological significance of Gideon's and Manoah's sacrifice; but it must be remembered that his argument turns on the cup-like hollows found on the surface of this and similar altar-rocks[1]; and the purpose of these is by no means certain at present.

with the meal offering] See on vi. 18. Some scholars regard the words here and in *v.* 23 as a later addition made for the sake of ritual completeness.

and the angel *did wondrously*] As it stands the text is hardly grammatical; so *the angel* is inserted in the EV. to make sense. LXX. cod. A and Vulg. read with a slight change 'unto the Lord *who doeth wondrously*,' and many adopt this correction. The clause following is accidentally repeated from *v.* 20, where it is in place. Perhaps both clauses (*and did wondrously*[2], *and.. looked on*) came in here from *v.* 20.

[1] At Marmita, 2 m. S.E. of Ṣar'a, at Nebī Samwīl = Mizpah, el-Jib = Gibeon, Petra, all ancient high-places. Rock-surfaces uncovered at Megiddo, at Taanach, at Gezer, exhibit similar cup-marks; see Driver, l.c. 51, 67, 81, and Vincent, *Canaan* (1907), 95 f.

[2] If restored to *v.* 20 read *w'hû mafli'* for *umafli'*.

the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar: and Manoah and his wife looked on; and they fell on their faces to the ground. But the angel of the LORD did no more appear 21
to Manoah or to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the LORD. And Manoah said unto his wife, 22
We shall surely die, because we have seen God. But his 23
wife said unto him, If the LORD were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meal offering at our hand, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would at this time have told us such things as these. And the woman bare a son, and called his name 24
[1]Samson: and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him.

[1] Heb. *Shimshon:*

20. *in the flame of the altar*] as though it were His native element, Ex. iii. 2. The sign may well have suggested a more spiritual view of Jehovah's nature (Kittel l.c.). The *flame* is that kindled by Manoah; contrast vi. 21.

22. *we have seen God*] lit. *for elohim we have seen*, i.e. a supernatural being; cf. 1 Sam. xxviii. 13 and prob. Gen. xxxii. 30; *God* is too definite. See on vi. 22.

23. *at this time*] lit. *at* (*about*) *the time*, an unusual expression, rendered *now* in xxi. 22, Num. xxiii. 23; cf. *at* (*about*) *the day* = *now* 1 Sam. ix. 27, 1 Kings xxii. 5.

24. *Samson*] The form implies that the word is either an adjective or a diminutive, 'solar' or 'little sun,' from *shemesh* = 'sun.' The Engl. *Samson*, based on the Gk. Σαμψών, is nearer the original pronunciation than the *Shimshōn* of the M.T. In Babylonian *Shamshânu* has recently been found as a proper name (Hilprecht-Clay, *Bab. Exp.* ix. 27. 70), and in Egyptian Shamshân occurs as the name of a town in S.W. Palestine on the list of places captured by Ramses II (B.C. 1292—1225). It cannot be without significance that less than 2 m. from Ṣar'a, just across the valley, lies 'Ain Shems, which preserves the name of the ancient Beth-shemesh (='temple of the sun) or Ir-shemesh (='city of the sun'), 1 S. vi. 9ff., Josh. xv. 10, xix. 41 etc. No doubt the worship of the sun prevailed at one time in the neighbourhood of Samson's traditional home; and such indications as these seem to imply that sun-worship was familiar to the Israelites of the district, if not actually practised by them, until the religion of Jehovah gained supremacy.

grew...blessed him] Cf. 1 Sam. ii. 26, iii. 19; St Luke i. 80, ii. 52.

25. *the spirit of the LORD*] See on iii. 13. The superhuman power of Jehovah *began to* **stir** *him* to daring feats against the Philistines; cf. St Mk. i. 12 'the Spirit driveth him forth.' The pass. of the verb (in a trans. sense only here) is rendered 'was troubled' in Gen. xli. 8, Ps. lxxvii. 4 etc.

25 And the spirit of the LORD began to move him in [1]Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

[1] That is, *The camp of Dan*. See ch. xviii. 12.

Mahaneh-dan] here lies in the heart of the Danite settlements; but according to xviii. 12 it was situated in Judah, at Kiriath-jearim or *behind* it, i.e. on the western side, and the six hundred, starting from Zorah and Eshtaol, are said to have reached Mahaneh-dan on their march to the north. A temporary encampment outside the Danite district might naturally receive the name of *Dan's Camp*, but not a place among the seats of the tribe. As it is unlikely that there were two places called *Dan's Camp* in this part of the country, we must suppose that there is something wrong about the name here. Perhaps for Mahaneh-dan we should read Manahath-dan, a happy suggestion made by Mr S. A. Cook (*Notes on O.T. Hist.*, p. 88 and *Encycl. Bibl.* s.v.); cf. 1 Chr. ii. 52, 54, and see above on *v.* 2. It is to be noticed that the grave of Manoah, the ancestor of the Manahathites, occupied exactly the position described in this verse, xvi. 31.

Eshtaol] Generally named with Zorah (*v.* 2); the two places were evidently close together. Zorah is certainly Ṣar'a; and Eshtaol may have stood on the site of Eshū' about 1½ m. to the N.E., up the valley which branches off northwards from the W. eṣ-Ṣarār (Sorek). Both places overlook the broad basin of the W. es-Sarār near its entrance into the Judaean highlands.

Ch. xiv. *The wedding at Timnah.*

Samson asks his parents to arrange a marriage for him in the usual way; but finding them unwilling, he takes the matter into his own hands. There was another way of gaining the bride, and this he determines to adopt. Among the Hebrews, as the present story shews, and among the Arabs in early days, it was considered lawful for a man to contract a union for a limited time; no intervention of the parents was necessary; the woman remained in her own home (cf. viii. 31), and was visited at intervals by her husband. An alliance of this kind, for which the Arabic term *mot'a* (or *ṣadāḳa*) marriage[1] is used, was condemned by Islam as 'the sister of harlotry,' and it received no sanction from later Jewish custom or opinion. Accordingly the original tradition of Samson's marriage has been modified in order to bring it into conformity with prevailing usages, chiefly by the addition of *and his father and his mother* in *v.* 5 and by corresponding changes in *vv.* 6—10. These insertions have introduced confusion into the text, which, however, becomes perfectly intelligible when once they are recognized. See Rob. Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in early*

[1] Mot'a marriage is defined in Arabic law as 'marriage for a period,' *Jus Safiiticum*, ed. Juynboll, p. 195. It was allowed by Mohammed as a temporary concession, and then abrogated; the tradition may be found in *Muslim* (Cairo, A.H. 1290), vol. i. p. 395. Cf. Jacob, *Altarab. Beduinenleben* (1897), p. 54. These references are due to Prof. Margoliouth.

And Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in **14**
Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. And he came 2
up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen
a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines: now
therefore get her for me to wife. Then his father and his 3
mother said unto him, Is there never a woman among the
daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that
thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?
And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she
pleaseth me well. But his father and his mother knew not 4
that it was of the LORD; for he sought an occasion against
the Philistines. Now at that time the Philistines had rule
over Israel.

Arabia, 67 ff., 76; S. A. Cook, *Laws of Moses and Code of Ḥammurabi*, 76 f.

1. *Timnah*] now Tibneh, about 4 m. S.W. of Zorah, on the low hills of the Shephēlah: hence *went down* is the word for reaching it from Samson's house (*vv.* 1, 5, 7, 10), and *go up*, for the journey in the opposite direction, *v.* 2 and 1 Sam. xxix. 9. According to Josh. xv. 10 Timnah lay on the N. border of Judah (cf. 2 Chr. xxviii. 18), and is assigned to Dan, *ib.* xix. 43 (P). It is mentioned in the Prism Inscr. of Sennacherib as one of the places which he captured after Altaḳu (Eltekeh), just before he ravaged Judah in 701 B.C., *Keil. Bibl.* ii. 92 f.

2. Samson at first behaves as a dutiful son, and consults both parents about his marriage. It is hardly necessary to strike out the reference to his mother.

3. It was the father's business to arrange a marriage and the amount of the dowry, e.g. Gen. xxiv. 2 ff., xxxiv. 4, xxxviii. 6. Hence the father alone is named in clause *b*; in cl. *a* the words *and his mother* look like an insertion to harmonize with *v.* 2: note *my people*; *said* is singular.

the uncircumcised] A standing term of contempt in Judg. and Sam., pointing to the alien origin of the Philistines, the only uncircumcised people known to the early Israelites; see on xiii. 1 and cf. 1 Sam. xviii. 25. A marriage outside the tribe was looked upon with disfavour, Gen. xxix. 19; both tribal feeling and religious motives would combine against an alliance with a Philistine; cf. Gen. xxiv. 3, Ex. xxxiv. 16 (JE), Dt. vii. 3.

4. It is not actually said that Manoah refused, but the sequel (*vv.* 5—7) in its original form implies that he did.

he sought an occasion] The subject is Jehovah, cf. Josh. xi. 20; *an occasion*, i.e. for a quarrel, cf. 2 Kings v. 7. The Philistines had always been the aggressors; an act of retaliation was justifiable.

over Israel] Israel as a whole did not yet exist. The generalized statement probably comes from the editor; cf. xiii. 1.

5 Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother,
to Timnah, and came to the vineyards of Timnah: and,
6 behold, a young lion roared against him. And the spirit
of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent him
as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his
hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he
7 had done. And he went down, and talked with the
8 woman; and she pleased Samson well. And after a while
he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the

5. *and his father and his mother*] A later addition made for the purpose of conforming Samson's marriage to the ordinary type, in which the preliminaries were arranged by the parents. The encounter with the lion and the interview with the woman clearly shew that Samson was alone.

a young lion] The lion was once common in Palestine, especially in the desert S. of Judah (Is. xxx. 6), and in the valley of the Jordan; it has disappeared since the time of the crusades.

6. *came mightily upon him*] Cf. *v.* 19, xv. 14, 1 Sam. x. 6, 10, xi. 6; the expression denotes a sudden rush of superhuman power.

and he rent him...a kid] *rent him as* **a man rends** *a kid*; the verb only here and in Lev. i. 17, where it is used of the ritual *tearing asunder* of a fowl in burnt offering. The comparison *as one rends a kid* may refer to some ceremonial act, as Moore suggests, but we have no evidence of such a practice. Milton's version, 'Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid,' *Samson Agonistes*, l. 128, gets over the difficulty by substituting 'the lion' for the indefinite subject (*as one rends*). The hero's fight with a lion is a favourite theme in ancient mythology and folk-lore; e.g. the scene represented on early Bab. seals, above, p. 130; the reliefs from the palace of Ashurbanipal (A. Jeremias, l.c. 479); Herakles and the Nemean lion figured on Greek coins[1]; the stories of David and of Benaiah (1 Sam xvii. 34—36, 2 S. xxiii. 20).

but he told not etc.] The clause introduces some confusion, and may be an interpolation from *v.* 9.

7. Samson acts on his own account; the parents remain at home, and take no part in the arrangements.

8. *he returned*] i.e. to Zorah; the woman stays in her father's house, as was the rule in a *mot'a* marriage. The natural sense of the narrative is destroyed by the expression *to take her*, i.e. to marry her (a single word in the Hebr.); obviously it has been inserted. The marriage does not begin till later, *v.* 10.

[1] Hill, *Catal. of Gk. Coins in the Brit. Mus.*, *Cyprus*, Pl. xxv. 6—8; *Lycaonia*, etc., Pl. XVII. 5. XL. 12. Instances of this *motif* from ancient sources are collected by Stahn, *Die Simson-Sage*, 1908, pp. 32 ff.

carcase of the lion: and, behold, there was a swarm of bees
in the body of the lion, and honey. And he took it into his 9
hands, and went on, eating as he went, and he came to his
father and mother, and gave unto them, and they did eat:
but he told them not that he had taken the honey out of
the body of the lion. And his father went down unto the 10
woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the
young men to do. And it came to pass, when they saw him, 11
that they brought thirty companions to be with him. And 12

a swarm of bees] Though in a hot country the carcase would quickly decay and shrivel up, some time must have elapsed before the bees could hive in it and form honey-comb. But in a popular story, so full of marvels, this matter-of-fact detail would not be considered. The tale of Onesilus told by Herodotus, v. 114, has been quoted to illustrate the incident. If we wish to look for the *origin* of this popular story, Stahn (l.c. on p. 140) offers an explanation which is certainly plausible. The connexion between the lion and the honey may be founded on the observed fact that when the sun stands in the sign of Leo, i.e. in the month of May—June, bees in Palestine produce their honey. This would be common knowledge, and would suggest an answer to the riddle in *v.* 14, which the Philistines might have answered if they had used their wits.

9. *And he took it...had taken*] The word, which occurs only here (? in Jer. v. 31), is used in the Talmud for taking honey out of the hive, detaching bread from the sides of the oven; so we may render *he scraped off* the honey into his palms. It is one of the household words of old Hebrew which rarely find their way into literature (Moore). For wild honey as food cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 25 ff., St Mk. i. 6.

10. *his father*] Again, an insertion. If the father was out of place in *v.* 5, he is more impossible at this stage. Originally the text ran *and he went down...and made*, or *and Samson went down...and made.*

a feast] The LXX. adds *of seven days*, perhaps merely an inference from *v.* 12. The *young men* mean bridegrooms. It was customary for the wedding feast to be held in the bridegroom's home (cf. 2 Esdr. ix. 47, Tobit viii. 19 f., xi. 19, St Mt. xxii. 2); in the present case, however, Samson gave the feast in the bride's village, if not in her father's house, *v.* 15.

11. *when they saw him*] With a slight change LXX. cod. A etc. read *because they feared him*; *they* must be the Philistines, though not mentioned in the context. The sight of Samson, *or* their fear of him, induced the Philistines to procure thirty *companions* (cf. *v.* 20), nominally as friends and supporters, but really in self-defence. The text does not give an altogether satisfactory sense, and may have suffered from alterations. If we read *that he brought*, which would be an improvement, we must treat *when they saw him* as an interpolation. This is Moore's view, and Budde proposes further re-arrangements;

Samson said unto them, Let me now put forth a riddle unto
you: if ye can declare it me within the seven days of the
feast, and find it out, then will I give you thirty linen
13 garments and thirty changes of raiment: but if ye cannot
declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty linen garments
and thirty changes of raiment. And they said unto him,
14 Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it. And he said unto
them,

Out of the eater came forth meat,
And out of the strong came forth sweetness.

15 And they could not in three days declare the riddle. And

the original state of the verse is not easy to recover. The *thirty* (cf. Cant. iii. 7 *sixty*) are of course Philistines, *v.* 18. At village weddings in Syria the bridegroom is still attended by a body-guard of young men with their leader (*v.* 20), who superintend the festivities and bear the cost. This ancient institution probably goes back to days when the party really needed protection (Wetzstein, *Z. f. Ethnologie*, 1873, 288 f.).

12. *a riddle*] This is the only specimen in the O.T. of a riddle in our sense (1 Kings x. 1); elsewhere the word means a sententious *maxim* Prov. i. 6, or a *parable* Ezek. xvii. 2.

the seven days] Cf. Gen. xxix. 22, 27, Tobit viii. 19 f., xi. 19. Similarly among the early Arabs (Benzinger, *Hebr. Arch.*[2], p. 109 *n.*).

linen garments] The garment referred to (Hebr. *sādîn*, Is. iii. 23, Pr. xxxi. 24, perhaps of foreign origin, cf. Assyr. *sudinnu*) was of fine material, and seems to have been worn sometimes outside the other clothes, sometimes next the skin. The Talmud implies that it was a linen sheet or *wrapper* of considerable size, and put to various uses. The LXX. render by *sindōn*, cf. St Mk. xiv. 51 f., xv. 46.

changes of raiment] Hebr. *ḥalîfôth begādîm*, generally explained as clothes which might be *exchanged* for ordinary raiment on festal occasions, *gala dresses*; Gen. xlv. 22, 2 Kings v. 5, 22, 23. But *ḥalîfôth* may be a loan-word from the Babylonian (*ḥalāpu* = 'clothe') with the sense of *clothings*; if this is the case, the two words *ḥalîfôth begādîm* will each mean the same thing (like our 'dress-clothes'), the foreign word being explained by the native one. It is worth noticing that LXX. here render στολὰς ἱματίων, and that in *v.* 19 *ḥalîfôth* occurs alone, *robes*.

13. The loss of the wager would leave the thirty companions practically naked; no wonder they express themselves strongly in *v.* 15!

14. The riddle is cast into poetical form; the verse consists of two members with three beats in each. The structure of the retort in *v.* 18 is the same.

it came to pass on the [1]seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us to [2]impoverish us? is it not *so*?
And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, Thou dost 16
but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me. And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it thee? And she wept 17
before him the seven days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she pressed him sore: and she told the riddle to the children of her people. And the men of the city said unto him on 18
the seventh day before the sun went down, What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion? And he said unto them,

If ye had not plowed with my heifer,
Ye had not found out my riddle.

And the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he 19

[1] The Sept. and Syriac have, *fourth*. [2] Or, *take that we have*

15. *on the seventh day*] Would the young men have waited all this time before pressing the woman to extract the answer? In *v.* 17 she is said to have tried herself to find it out all the seven days. The two statements are inconsistent. The LXX. and Pesh. read *on the fourth day*; but this is suspiciously like what we should expect after *in three days v.* 14. Most critics think that the numbers in *vv.* 14, 15 were added to the original text in order to heighten the difficulty of the riddle and the despair of the Philistines.

unto us] LXX. *unto thee*. Samson could not be expected to tell the Philistines himself.

to impoverish us] lit. *take possession of, dispossess us*. The reflex. stem has the meaning *come to poverty* in Gen. xlv. 11, Pr. xx. 13 etc.

is it not so*?*] The Hebr. requires a slight correction: 'was it to impoverish us that ye invited us *hither*?' So five Hebr. MSS., Targ.

16. *before him*] **upon** *him* and *v.* 17, i.e. on his neck; the same idiom in Gen. xlv. 15. For the woman's wile cf. xvi. 15.

17. *she pressed him sore*] lit. *reduced him to straits* by her importunity; again in xvi. 16.

18. *before the sun went down*] lit. *went in*. But the word for *sun* (*heres*) is rare and poetical, and it has the accus. ending which denotes motion towards. A slight correction proposed by Stade gives the right sense: *before he went* **into the chamber**, the same word as in xv. 1. They wait till the last moment before the wedding was completed.

went down to Ashkelon, and smote thirty men of them, and took their [1]spoil, and gave the changes *of raiment* unto them that declared the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he
20 went up to his father's house. But Samson's wife was *given* to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.

15 But it came to pass after a while, in the time of wheat harvest, that Samson visited his wife with a kid; and he said, I will go in to my wife into the chamber. But her father
2 would not suffer him to go in. And her father said, I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion: is not her younger sister fairer than
3 she? take her, I pray thee, instead of her. And Samson

[1] Or, *apparel*

19. The sudden access of superhuman power seems to coincide with the outburst of natural passion, as in *v.* 6, xv. 14.

Ashkelon] Perhaps Khirbet 'Asḳalūn, about 4 m. S. of Tibneh (Timnah), rather than the well-known Ashkelon on the sea-coast, 24 m. or 8 hours distant. The anger ought to precede rather than follow the exploit; but the writer probably did not trouble about logical sequence in his narrative of marvels. There is no need to regard the feat at Ashkelon as a later addition (Moore, Budde, Nowack) because it leads to nothing in the sequel.

their spoil] lit. things *stripped off* a dead enemy, *exuviae*; only again 2 Sam. ii. 21.

he went up] without consummating the marriage, as the previous verses seem to imply (esp. *v.* 18); although it is true that sometimes the consummation took place on the first and not on the last day of the feast, Gen. xxix. 23.

20. After this violent rupture, and to make up for the disgrace inflicted upon the bride, she *was given to his groomsman who had acted as his groom*; cf. xv. 2, 6, St Jn. iii. 29. LXX. cod. A renders by the technical word *νυμφαγωγός*, the leader of the bride.

Ch. xv. 1—8. *Samson's revenge.*

1. *in the time of wheat harvest*] From mid-May to mid-June in this region. The harvest is mentioned to prepare the scene for *v.* 5. Country weddings generally take place in March (Wetzstein, l.c.); a couple of months may have passed since the furious ending of the marriage feast.

a kid] Apparently a customary present on these occasions; Gen. xxxviii. 17. The custom may have been based on the heathen idea that the goat was sacred to the goddess of love (Ashtōreth); cf. Dt. vii. 13 Hebr.

into the chamber] The women's quarters. The woman is still in her father's house, though she is married (xiv. 20).

said unto them, This time [1]shall I be blameless in regard of the Philistines, when I do them a mischief. And Samson 4
went and caught three hundred [2]foxes, and took [3]firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between every two tails. And when he had set the brands 5
on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks and the standing corn, and also the oliveyards. Then the Philistines said, Who 6
hath done this? And they said, Samson, the son in law of the Timnite, because he hath taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And the Philistines came up, and burnt her and her father with fire. And Samson said unto them, 7
If ye do after this manner, surely I will be avenged of you,

[1] Or, *shall I be quits with* [2] Or, *jackals* [3] Or, *torches*

3. *unto them*] Cf. *v.* 7. The family and friends were no doubt discussing the situation with oriental excitement.

shall I be blameless in regard of] i.e. I am resolved to have my revenge on the Philistines, and no one will be able to blame me for it (cf. Num. xxxii. 22, 2 Sam. iii. 28); Samson's words express a resolve in a tone of exultation. *When I do* should be **for I am going to do.**

4. *three hundred foxes*] The fox is a solitary animal, and to catch 300 would be impossible for any one but Samson. It seems a pity to lessen the marvel in the interests of prosaic probability by translating *jackals*, animals which roam in packs, though the word can mean this, Ps. lxiii. 10, Neh. iv. 3 RVm. etc. The grotesque trick was thoroughly relished by the story-tellers. Curious parallels to it are quoted from different quarters. Among the heathen Arabs in time of drought cattle, with lighted torches tied to their tails, were driven to the mountains in the hope of bringing down rain (Wellhausen, *Reste Arab. Heidentums*[2], 167). At Rome foxes, treated in the same way, were let loose into the Circus during the Cerealia (April 12—19), the intention being to represent symbolically, and by substitute, the fires which were so often fatal to the ripe corn in the heat of the Dog-days. Ovid gives a rationalistic explanation of the custom in *Fasti* iv. 679—712 (see Preller, *Römische Mythologie*[3], ii. 43 f.). Possibly a symbolic rite of this kind may have been practised, as an exorcism, among the Canaanites or even the Israelites in the Danite district, and Samson associated with it in popular story. If such was the case, Samson was made to play the part which properly belonged to the Sun-god.

5. *oliveyards*] lit. *vineyard of oliveyard*, which cannot be right; read *vineyard* **and** *oliveyard*, with LXX., Vulg.; cf. xiv. 5.

• **6.** *her father*] Read with many Hebr. MSS., LXX. cod. A, Pesh. etc. *her father's* **house**, i.e. family, as in the threat xiv. 15.

8 and after that I will cease. And he smote them hip and
thigh with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt
in the cleft of the rock of Etam.
9 Then the Philistines went up, and pitched in Judah,
10 and spread themselves in Lehi. And the men of Judah
said, Why are ye come up against us? And they said, To
bind Samson are we come up, to do to him as he hath done

8. *hip and thigh*] lit. *leg upon thigh*, so that the limbs of the slain fall one upon another: such seems to be the force of the prep. *upon*, cf. Am. iii. 15 'the winter house *upon* the summer house,' i.e. so that the one falls upon the other, and Gen. xxxii. 11, Hos. x. 14. At any rate it is a proverbial expression for *with a great slaughter*.

the rock of Etam] The Etam between Beth-lehem and Tekoa, 2 Chr. xi. 6, is too high up and too far away. Schick, who finds the scenes of Samson's exploits in the neighbourhood of 'Artuf a little S.E. of Zorah, identifies Etam with 'Arak Isma'în, near Marmita, remarkable for a perpendicular rock with a cave which can only be reached by *going down* to it (*ZDPV.* x. 143 ff.). Perhaps this was almost within the Danite territory; *vv.* 9 ff. imply that the rock of Etam was in Judah.

9—20. *Local traditions.*

Provoked by Samson's violence, the Philistines made a raid upon Lehi in Judah for the purpose of capturing their enemy. The name of the place was suggestive, and tradition attached to it the story of S.'s feat with the 'fresh jawbone (*lᵉḥî*) of an ass.' Popular etymology explained Ramath-lehi, 'the height of Lehi' (from *rûm*), as the place where S. 'threw away' (*rāmāh*) the jawbone; a hollow basin in the hill side, which held the water of the 'Partridge Spring' ('*ên hakkôrē*'), became the spring which God granted when S. 'called' (*ḳārā*') for help in his exhaustion. It is noteworthy that the exploit of Shammah, one of David's heroes, also took place at Lehi, 2 Sam. xxiii. 11 (reading *unto Lehi* for *into a troop*); cf. also the story of Shamgar, iii. 31.

9. *spread themselves in Lehi*] Better, *made a raid against Lehi*; 2 Sam. v. 18, 22. The situation of Lehi is unknown; it must have been nearer to the Philistines than Etam, and in the neighbourhood of the other places already mentioned. The name=*jawbone* (LXX. *v.* 14 *Siagōn*) was no doubt suggested by the formation of a prominent rock; cf. Ass's Jaw (Ὄνου γνάθος), the name of a peninsula W. of Cape Malea in the Peloponnese (Strabo, p. 363), and the Arabic place-name Camel's Jaw (*laḥy gamal*, quot. by Wellhausen).

10 f. The Philistines have no quarrel with any one but Samson, and the Judaeans exhibit no resentment against their alien rulers. This shews that Samson's attacks upon the Philistines were of a purely local and private nature, and that the Israelites in this part of the country had not yet acquired any sense of national feeling or of a common cause.

to us. Then three thousand men of Judah went down to 11
the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest
thou not that the Philistines are rulers over us? what then
is this that thou hast done unto us? And he said unto
them, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them.
And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, 12
that we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines.
And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will
not fall upon me yourselves. And they spake unto him, 13
saying, No; but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee
into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee. And they
bound him with two new ropes, and brought him up from
the rock. When he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted 14
as they met him: and the spirit of the LORD came mightily
upon him, and the ropes that were upon his arms became
as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands [1]dropped from
off his hands. And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and 15
put forth his hand, and took it, and smote a thousand men
therewith. And Samson said, 16

With the jawbone of an ass, [2]heaps upon heaps,
With the jawbone of an ass have I smitten a thousand men.

And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, 17
that he cast away the jawbone out of his hand; and [3]that
place was called [4]Ramath-lehi. And he was sore athirst, 18

[1] Heb. *were melted.*
[2] Heb. *an heap, two heaps.*
[3] Or, *he called that place*
[4] That is, *The hill of the jawbone.*

14. See on xiv. 19.

15. *a thousand men*] The numbers of course belong to the extraordinary character of the story. Moore notes that, according to Moslem tradition, the first blood in the cause of Islam was drawn with a similar weapon, the jawbone of a camel.

16. *heaps upon heaps*] See marg., and cf. Ex. viii. 14 [Hebr. 10, lit. *heaps, heaps*]. But a verb is wanted to complete the parallelism with clause b; and, simply pronouncing the words differently, we may render *heaping I have heaped them*, i.e. **I have heaped them high.** The verb *ḥamar* was chosen for its similarity to *ḥamôr* = 'ass.' The Verss. give a verb, LXX., Vulg. *delevi*, Pesh. 'I have heaped heaps of them.'

17. *was called*] The text here and in *v.* 19 is to be preferred to the marg. *Ramath-lehi*] i.e. *the height of Lehi*, cf. Ramath-mizpeh Josh. xiii. 26, Ramoth-gilead etc. Popular etymology, however, gave it the sense, *casting away of the jawbone*.

and called on the LORD, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance by the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised.
19 But God clave the hollow place that is in [1]Lehi, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived: wherefore [2]the name thereof was called [3]En-hakkore, which is in Lehi, unto this day.
20 And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

[1] Or, *the jawbone* [2] Or, *he called the name thereof*
[3] That is, *The spring of him that called.*

18. Samson becomes religious when he is in straits; cf. xvi. 28.
great deliverance] Cf. 1 Sam. xix. 5, 2 Sam. xxiii. 10, 12.

19. *the hollow place that is in Lehi*] *the* **Mortar** *which is in L.*, i.e. a mortar-shaped basin in the hill side. The word comes from a root meaning, not 'to be hollow,' but *to pound* (cf. in Aram. *NSI.*, p. 171, and the Palmyrene pr. n. *Maktash* = 'the pounder'); so *maktēsh* = 'pounding place,' i.e. *mortar*, Prov. xxvii. 22, Zeph. i. 11 (the name of a quarter in Jerusalem). The old interpretation, represented by the marg., went wrong by translating *Lehi* instead of taking it as a pr. n.; *maktēsh* was then understood to mean a hollow place in the jaw, or *the hole of a tooth*, through which the spring rose, as many Fathers and Rabbis imagine (see *Ber. Rab.* § 98, Rashi, Ḳimḥi etc.). Some of the Greek versions render the word by ὄλμος, which can mean both a mortar and the hollow of a double tooth; Symmachus likewise translates *the grinder* (τὴν μύλην); and thus arose another way of understanding the word, viz. *the molar tooth*, so Vulg. The LXX. transl. as RV. 'the hole which is in Siagon.'

his spirit...revived] Cf. Gen. xlv. 27.

The spring, which was pointed out in the writer's day, and therefore could not have had anything to do with a jawbone, was known as En-hakkore, i.e. the Spring of the Partridge (lit. *the crier*, 1 Sam. xxvi. 20, Jer. xvii. 11); playing on the word, the story-tellers connected it with Samson's *cry* to God in his thirst.

20. The Dtc. editor's formula, usually at the close of a judge's history, comes curiously here before the end; perhaps because the editor felt that the end was not a suitable place for a statement of this kind. The words now standing in xvi. 31 b are merely a briefer repetition of the present verse, and may have been added by some later hand. The alternative is to suppose that the Dtc. editor closed the story of Samson here, and left out ch. xvi. as contributing nothing to his purpose; ch. xvi. was afterwards restored to its place, with the concluding formula (so Budde, Moore, Nowack). See Introduction § 2 c.

twenty years] out of the *forty*, xiii. 1. In the Rabbinic schools it was proposed to correct the reading here to *forty*, Talm. Jer. *Soṭa* i. 8.

And Samson went to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and **16**
went in unto her. *And it was told* the Gazites, saying, 2
Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and
laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were
quiet all the night, saying, [1]*Let be* till morning light, then we
will kill him. And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at 3
midnight, and laid hold of the doors of the gate of the city,
and the two posts, and plucked them up, bar and all, and
put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top
of the mountain that is before Hebron.

[1] Or, *When* (or *Before*) *the morning is light*

Ch. **xvi. 1—3.** *Samson at Gaza.*

1. *Gaza*] The most southerly of the Philistine cities, and far from the scene of Samson's other adventures. Long before the Philistines arrived Gaza is mentioned in Egyptian lists (e.g. in the time of Thothmes III), and in the Amarna letters. As it lay at the meeting-point of the caravan-routes from Egypt and the Arabian desert, it was always an important centre; the kind of place where bad characters might be found. In Hebr. the name is 'Azza, with the hard '*ayin* represented in Assyr. by *ḫ* (hence Ḫazzatu), in Greek by *g* (hence Gaza); now Ghazze or Razze.

2. And it was told *the Gazites*] The verb has fallen out by accident; the LXX. read it in the text.

all night in the gate] The text makes the Philistines lie in wait all the night, and keep quiet all the night; but there would be no need to keep watch in the gate at night, for the gate would be shut. To relieve the confusion the simplest plan is either to omit the first *all the night*, or to read *all the day*. The Philistines patrolled the town and lay in wait [during the day], hoping to catch Samson at the city gate when he went out; at night they could only keep quiet until the morning, and then fall upon their enemy. The last cl. = lit. *until the morning dawns and we kill him*, *until* implying the verb *wait*; for the Hebr. idiom see Driver, *Tenses*, p. 135, and cf. 1 Sam. i. 22 etc. Hebrew coordinates clauses which are really subordinate. The marg. 'or *Before*' is not right.

3. *plucked them up*] Cf. *v.* 14; the word is used of *plucking up* tent-pegs Is. xxxiii. 20, hence of *setting out* on a journey Gen. xxxv. 5 and often.

The gate was probably in two leaves, turning upon pins in sockets, and secured by a bar (cf. 1 K. iv. 13, Am. i. 5 etc.) which was let into the posts on either side. Samson pulled up the whole framework of the gate, doors, posts and bar, and carried it off in one piece.

the mountain that is before Hebron] Hebron is at least 40 m. from Gaza, and *before*, if it does mean *east of* (cf. Dt. xxxii. 49, 1 Kings xi.

4 And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman [1]in the
5 valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to [2]afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred
6 *pieces* of silver. And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou
7 mightest be bound to afflict thee. And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven [3]green withes that were never dried, then shall I become weak, and be as another
8 man. Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven [3]green withes which had not been dried, and she

[1] Or, *by the brook* [2] Or, *humble* [3] Or, *new bow-strings*

7 etc.), may also denote *overlooking* (Num. xxi. 20, xxiii. 28 etc.). To make the prodigious feat more credible, some take *the mountain* to be the low hill of el-Muntār, half an hour outside the walls of Gaza on the E.; for a recent description in support of this view see Gautier, *Souv. de Terre-Sainte* (1898), 131 f. But can el-Muntār be said to *face* Hebron? Cheyne (*Encycl. Bibl.*, col. 4432) makes the suggestion that Hebron is a mistake for Sharuhen (Josh. xix. 6), otherwise Shaaraim = *the two gates* (1 Sam. xvii. 52), which may be the Egyptian fortress Sharaḥan on the road from Egypt to Gaza; the legend, then, was told to account for the name. Similarly Stahn (*Die Simson-Sage*, p. 31), who supposes that there was a rock or defile near Hebron called Shaar Gaza (i.e. *gate of Gaza* or *strong gate*); the story then will have had the same origin as that which accounted for the names Ramath-lehi and En-hakkore, xv. 17, 19.

4—31. *Samson and Delīlah: his ruin and famous end.*

4. *the valley of Sorek*] Now Wādi eṣ-Ṣarār, a broad valley narrowing as it rises towards the Judaean highlands; the railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem ascends the lower part of it. *Soreḳ* denotes a choice kind of vine (Gen. xlix. 11, Is. v. 2, Jer. ii. 21), which may have given its name to the valley. A ruined site near Ṣar'a (xiii. 2 *n.*) is still called Sūrīk.

5. *his great strength lieth*] **his strength is great**; render similarly in *vv.* 6, 15.

eleven hundred pieces *of silver*] in uncoined metal, calculated by the scales (Gen. xxiii. 16): a large bribe when multiplied by five (iii. 3). The odd number means a full thousand, cf. xvii. 2. In xiv. 15 the Philistines work upon the woman's fear; now they appeal to the cupidity of the courtezan.

7. *seven green withes*] Follow marg.; similarly LXX. and Vulg. The cords (cf. Ps. xi. 2, xxi. 12) were to be made of *fresh* or *moist* gut.

bound him with them. Now she had liers in wait abiding in 9
the inner chamber. And she said unto him, The Philistines
be upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withes, as a
string of tow is broken when it [1]toucheth the fire. So his
strength was not known. And Delilah said unto Samson, 10
Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell
me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound. And 11
he said unto her, If they only bind me with new ropes
wherewith no work hath been done, then shall I become
weak, and be as another man. So Delilah took new 12
ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The
Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And the liers in wait
were abiding in the inner chamber. And he brake them
from off his arms like a thread. And Delilah said unto 13
Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies:
tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said
unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with
the web. And she fastened it with the pin, and said unto 14
him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he

[1] Heb. *smelleth.*

Elsewhere the adjective is applied to trees or fruit, hence the rendering of EV.; *withes* = flexible twigs, esp. of willow; Josephus thinks of vine stalks. There may have been a magic charm in the number *seven* here and in *v.* 13.

8. *she bound him*] When he was asleep, as we may infer from *vv.* 14, 19. What Samson proposed in jest, Delīlah carried out in earnest.

11. *new ropes*] As in xv. 13, 14.

13. *If thou weavest the seven locks...web*] **plaits...warp.** Weaving was the work of women as well as of men; see the illustration from the Egyptian tombs at Beni Hasan dating from the Middle Kingdom, Benzinger, *Hebr. Archäol.*[2], p. 151; Delīlah has a loom in her house. This was a horizontal loom fastened into the ground, as in the illustration referred to[1]; hence it would be easy to weave the hair of a person lying asleep upon the floor into *the warp*, i.e. the horizontal threads which are intersected at right angles by the weft, in this case Samson's hair. To form the web, i.e. the woven cloth, a further operation is necessary, the beating up of the weft with a flat rod or batten, here rendered *pin* (*v.* 14); the word usually means *peg*, esp. a tent-peg (see v. 26 mg.), but that it could also be used of a flat stick appears from Dt. xxiii. 13 (*paddle* or *spade*).

[1] It looks as if it were upright; but this is due to the absence of perspective in Egyptian drawing.

awaked out of his sleep, and plucked away the pin of the
15 beam, and the web. And she said unto him, How canst
thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me?
thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told
16 me wherein thy great strength lieth. And it came to pass,
when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him,
17 that his soul was vexed unto death. And he told her all his
heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon
mine head; for I have been a Nazirite unto God from my
mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go
from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other
18 man. And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his
heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines,

The sentences needed to complete *v.* 13 and to provide the proper beginning of *v.* 14 have accidentally fallen out. With the help of the Greek versions the gap may be filled thus: "If thou weavest the seven plaits of my head with the warp, *and beatest them up with the batten, then shall I become weak and be as any other man. So she made him sleep, and wove the seven plaits of his head with the warp*, and beat them up with the batten." It will be noticed that the existing text and the restored text both end in the same way. The eye of the copyist passed from the first *with the warp* to the second, and overlooked the intervening lines: a good instance of the source of textual mistakes known as homoioteleuton. The *seven* locks may have something to do with solar mythology. The Babyl. Gilgămesh had seven locks; in later Greek art Helios is usually represented with the same number.

14. *the pin of the beam*] The Hebrew is ungrammatical and gives the impression that *the pin* has been intruded. Instead of *beam* render **loom** (*'ereg*, Job vii. 6). The general sense is clear: Samson pulled up the whole framework, warp and all, out of the ground by the hair of his head.

The Greek versions, understanding *pin* in its ordinary meaning of *peg*, construct a different arrangement of the apparatus: they imply that the end of the loom was fastened by pegs into the wall opposite, and that Samson's hair was stretched horizontally with the warp. See the art. 'Weaving' by Prof. A. R. S. Kennedy in the *Encycl. Bibl.*, upon which the foregoing notes are based.

16. *she pressed him*] Cf. xiv. 17. When it came to testing the higher kind of strength, Samson failed. 'I to myself was false ere thou to me'; Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, 824.

17. *all his heart*] i.e. all that he knew about his supernatural secret, xiii. 5—7. The *heart* in the O.T. is the seat not merely of the affections, but of the mind and will; so in *vv.* 15, 18.

18. *he hath told me*] So the Hebr. marg. (Kerē); this is to be preferred to the Hebr. text (Kethibh) which = RVm.

saying, Come up this once, for [1]he hath told me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought the money in their hand. And she made him 19
sleep upon her knees; and she called for [2]a man, and shaved off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, 20
The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times, and shake myself. But he wist not that the LORD was departed from him. And the Philistines laid hold on him, and put 21
out his eyes; and they brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison

[1] Or, according to another reading, *he had told her* [2] Or, *the men*

and brought] The verb is probably an insertion; read simply *and*, i.e. *with*. The previous verb *came up* requires a slight alteration in the Hebr.

19. *she made him sleep*] Cf. *v.* 14 LXX. cod. A. For *a man* the original has **the man**, i.e. who was waiting in readiness. For *and shaved* (subj. Delilah) the context seems to require the reading *and he shaved*; the man was called in for this purpose.

she began to afflict him] Can this mean, by cutting off his hair? Moore suggests that D. bound him (cf. *vv.* 5, 6), as may be implied in the words *I will shake myself* in *v.* 20. The Greek reads *he began to be afflicted* or *humbled*; his strength began to ebb away as the hair fell. So many moderns.

20. *the LORD was departed from him*] Cf. 1 Sam. xviii. 12, xxviii. 15, 16. The unshorn locks were the secret of his strength, and these were a sign of consecration to Jehovah; so long as he preserved them the Lord was with him. For any exceptional feat, however, he needed a special access of Jehovah's spirit; xiii. 25, xiv. 6, 19, xv. 14, xvi. 28. Such seems to be the extent of the religious idea in the story.

21. *to Gaza*] 'His degeneration began at Gaza, therefore he was punished at Gaza,' runs the Rabbinic comment, which also sees a just retribution for the sin of his eyes (xiv. 3 lit. 'she is right in mine eyes') in the loss of his eyes. Talm. *Sota* 9*b*.

and he did grind] It was his continual task, as the tense indicates. Grinding corn for the household was the work of women (Eccl. xii. 3 RVm., St Mt. xxiv. 41), of the housewife or of female slaves (Ex. xi. 5, cf. Is. xlvii. 2). Male prisoners and captives were sometimes condemned to this labour, as for example King Zedekiah in Babylon, according to the Gk. version of Jer. lii. 11. Similarly among the Romans, minor offenders were set to work at the public mills.

22 house. Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again
after he was shaven.
23 And the lords of the Philistines gathered them together
for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to
rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our
24 enemy into our hand. And when the people saw him, they

22. *began to grow again*] and his strength simultaneously. The remark prepares the way for the supreme effort at the end. We must suppose a considerable interval to have passed between the capture and the closing scene.

23. *a great sacrifice unto Dagon*] at Gaza, as the context suggests (*v.* 21). Dagon was the god specially honoured by the Philistines; he had a temple at Ashdod (1 Sam. v. 2—7, 1 Macc. x. 83 f., xi. 4) and elsewhere; there was a Beth-dagon in the Shephēlah (Josh. xv. 41 ?= *Beit-dejan* 6 m. S.E. of Joppa, or *Dejan* 1½ m. further south[1]) and on the boundary of Asher (Josh. xix. 27). But the name also occurs outside the territory once held by the Philistines; it survives in *Beit-dejan* 7 m. E. of Nāblus; and we may infer that the worship of Dagon was not confined to the Philistines. Most likely he was a Canaanite god adopted by the Philistines when they settled in the country, just as they adopted Ashtoreth (1 Sam. xxxi. 10). The name of the Canaanite letter-writer *Dagan-takala* in the Amarna tablets (Nos. 215, 216) carries us back to the age when Babylonian influences prevailed in Canaan; and Dagan is met with as the name of a deity from the early Babylonian down to the Assyrian period, both in proper names and in conjunction with Anu; the latter fact points to a god of heaven. But whether he was a native Babylonian god is not certain; it seems probable that he was introduced from outside, perhaps from Canaan; most authorities identify him with the Philistine Dagon[2]. Of his nature nothing definite is known. Philo of Byblus derives the name from *dāgān=corn*, and regards him as an agricultural deity; Ḳimḥi (xiiith century A.D.) in his commentary on 1 Sam. v. 4 mentions a tradition that Dagon's image was shaped as a man above the waist and a fish below (*dāg=fish*). These, however, are only etymological guesses. It may be questioned whether the god, half man and half fish, represented on the coins of Ascalon and Arvad, was intended for Dagon[3].

for they said...our hand] looks like a gloss founded on the song in the verse which follows.

24. *saw him*] As Samson does not appear till the next verse, Lagrange suggests that *him* refers to Dagon, whose image was uncovered at this moment or carried out in procession. It is more likely

[1] One of these was probably the Bit-daganna mentioned in the Prism Inscr. of Sennacherib, *KB.* ii. 93.

[2] See Dhorme, *La Rel. Assyro-Babylonienne* (1910), 17, 35, 165; Zimmern, *KAT.*[3], 358.

[3] As Lagrange considers, *Ét. sur les Rel. Sémitiques*[2], 131 f.

praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into
our hand our enemy, and the destroyer of our country,
which hath slain many of us. And it came to pass, when 25
their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson,
that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson
out of the prison house; and he made sport before them:
and they set him between the pillars. And Samson said 26
unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that
I may feel the pillars whereupon the house resteth, that
I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and 27
women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and
there were upon the roof about three thousand men and
women, that beheld while Samson made sport. And Samson 28
called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember
me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this
once, O God, that I may [1]be at once avenged of the Philis-
tines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two 29
middle pillars upon which the house rested, and leaned
upon them, the one with his right hand, and the other with

[1] Or, *be avenged...for one of my two eyes*

that the order of the narrative has been disturbed; if we place *v.* 24 after *v.* 25 everything falls into natural sequence.

Our god hath delivered] The song is constructed of four lines, each ending with a rhyming suffix *-ênu=our*. The last line runs lit. 'and who multiplied our slain.' Other specimens of this kind of rhyme, common in Arabic poetry but rare in the O.T., may be seen in xiv. 18 b ('my heifer...my riddle'); Gen. iv. 23; 1 Sam. xviii. 7. It will be noticed that all these are popular, traditional verses.

25. *he made sport before them*] in the court, we may suppose, in front of *the house*, i.e. the temple of Dagon. When the sport was over, Samson was set among the pillars of the open hall or porch of the temple, where the crowd could satisfy their curiosity by a nearer view.

27. *and all the lords...three thousand men and women*] No doubt an insertion to heighten the effect; grammatically *full of men and women* is carried on by *that beheld*, shewing that the intervening words are not original. No mention of the people on the roof is made in *v.* 30. The LXX. cod. B has 70 for 3000.

28. *that I may be at once avenged*] A questionable rendering; follow the mg., **that I may be avenged...for one of my two eyes.** The grim humour of the words, as Moore points out, is altogether in character. The utmost vengeance would barely compensate for the loss of one eye alone.

30 his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines.
And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house
fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were
therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more
31 than they which he slew in his life. Then his brethren and
all the house of his father came down, and took him, and
brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol
in the buryingplace of Manoah his father. And he judged
Israel twenty years.

30. *Let me die*] lit. 'let my soul die.' In the O.T. the soul is not the immortal, but the mortal, element in man: it is that which breathes, the principle of life. When a person dies the soul *goes out* (Gen. xxxv. 18, cf. Jer. xv. 9) and exists no more.

the dead which he slew]

'Samson hath quit himself
Like Samson.'—Milton, *S. Agonistes*, 1709 f.

31. *came down*] Gaza lay near the sea; Samson's home was on the slopes of the Central Range. The Philistines' quarrel was not with the kinsmen; they were not refused the right of sepulture. Contrast 1 Sam. xxxi. 10 f.

Manoah his father] Strictly speaking, the ancestor of the family. See notes on xiii. 2, 25.

The usual formula closes the narrative in the manner of RD. See on iii. 10.

For the exploit of Shamgar against the Philistines see note on iii. 31.

PART III.

Chapters xvii.—xviii. and xix.—xxi. form a double Appendix to the Book of Judges proper (ii. 6—xvi. 31). As they exhibit no traces of the characteristic handling of the Deuteronomic compiler, and lie outside his chronological scheme, they must have been added by some later editor after the central division of the Book had reached its present shape. We can readily understand why these narratives were appended: they belong to the same general period as the 'judges,' and were considered to be worth preserving for their historical value, which indeed is great. We can also see why the Deuteronomic compiler left them out: they are not concerned with the doings of any 'judge,' while they reveal a state of morals and religion in Israel which by no means came up to the Deuteronomic standard of what was edifying or correct.

Appendix I. Chs. xvii.—xviii. The Origin of the Sanctuary at Dan.

A man named Micah in the hill country of Ephraim had a sanctuary of his own, provided with a sacred image and served by a Levite. In the course of their migration towards the north, a party of 600 Danites came to Micah's village, robbed his shrine, and carried off both the image and the priest. They advanced up the country to Laish, a town near the sources of the Jordan, captured it, changed its name to Dan, and set up Micah's image there and made his Levite the priest of the new settlement. Such was the origin of the sanctuary at Dan, a place renowned in Israelite history. Cf. the accounts of the origin of the sanctuary at Beer-sheba Gen. xxi. 33, xxvi. 23—25 J, at Beth-el *ib.* xxviii. 17—22 E, at Ophrah Jud. viii. 24—27, at Jerusalem 2 Sam. xxiv. 18—25.

When did these events take place? The editor who appended the story dates it vaguely in the days before the monarchy (xvii. 6, xviii. 1), and probably meant us to think of some time in the interval between Samson and Saul. But we have found reason to believe that a portion of the Danites, and only a portion is mentioned here, had settled in the north before the days of Deborah (see on xiii. 2); probably, therefore, the migration belonged to the early period referred to in i. 34.

The story throws an interesting light on the social and religious conditions of ancient Israel. A wealthy person or family might possess a private sanctuary and the means of consulting the divine oracle; any Israelite could become a priest, but a Levite was preferred on account of his special skill. The Levites of the period seem to have attached themselves to the tribe of Judah, and to have made themselves a centre in Beth-lehem; but they joined other tribes too, or wandered in search of employment. It was a time of barbarous manners and crude religious ideas. As a matter of course the graven image, the ephod, and terāphim, were used in the service of Jehovah; the racy description of the robbery leaves no doubt as to which side the story-teller favoured.

In many places the narrative is confused and inconsistent, especially at the following points: (*a*) the account of the origin of Micah's image xvii. 2, 3, contrast *v.* 5; (*b*) the enumeration of his *sacra*, graven image, molten image, ephod, terāphim xvii. 4, 5, xviii. 14, 17 f., 30; (*c*) the account of the Levite in xvii. 8—11 a, 12 b, 13, xviii. 17 b, 18—20, 30, contrast *the young man* in xvii. 7, 11 b, 12 a, xviii. 3, 15; (*d*) the sending out of the spies xviii. 2; (*e*) the spoliation of Micah's sanctuary xviii. 14, 16, 18 a, contrast *v.* 15. This confusion and redundancy have been explained as due to later interpolations assisted by the corruption of the text (Kuenen, Wellhausen, and recently Lagrange). Most modern scholars, however, recognize here, as in the story of Gideon, a combination of two narratives, both very ancient and closely parallel; and on the whole this view seems to give a more satisfactory explanation of the difficulties. But while the signs of more than one hand are clear, much uncertainty remains as to which details are to be

17 And there was a man of the hill country of Ephraim,
2 whose name was Micah. And he said unto his mother, The
eleven hundred *pieces* of silver that were taken from thee,
about which thou didst utter [1]a curse, and didst also speak
it in mine ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it.
And his mother said, Blessed be my son of the LORD.
3 And he restored the eleven hundred *pieces* of silver to his
mother, and his mother said, I verily [2]dedicate the silver
unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a graven

[1] Or, *an adjuration* [2] Or, *had dedicated*

assigned to the one narrator or the other; our results must be to a great extent merely tentative.

1. *the hill country of Ephraim*] See on iii. 27. In view of its subsequent connexion with the sanctuary at Dan, some think that Micah's house was at Beth-el. The narrative, however, leaves the situation vague; it may imply that he lived somewhere on the road which ran northwards along the Central Highlands, xviii. 13.

2. *eleven hundred* pieces *of silver*] See on xvi. 5.

and didst also speak it] A paraphrase; lit. 'and didst also say....' The text of verses 2 and 3 has suffered disturbance; the words of the speech are missing here; the sequence 'and he restored...I will restore (*v.* 3)...And he restored (*v.* 4)' is unintelligible. Of the various corrections proposed the most satisfactory is that of Moore: 'and thou didst utter a curse and didst also say in mine ears, I verily dedicate the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a graven image [and a molten image]; behold, the silver is with me; I took it; now therefore I will restore it unto thee. And his mother said, Blessed be my son of the LORD. *v.* 4. So he restored the silver unto his mother, and his mother took two hundred pieces of silver' etc. That is to say, when the mother of Micah discovered that the money had been stolen, she cursed the thief (never dreaming that her son was guilty), and further consecrated the money forthwith to Jehovah. Under dread of the curse, and fearing the consequences of sacrilege, Micah confessed the theft and restored the money. In the text as rearranged, the words 'And he restored the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother' in *v.* 3 have been struck out as a mistaken anticipation of *v.* 4.

The curse was held to possess a living, potent efficacy (cf. Zech. v. 3); it called upon the offender to come forward; and whoever heard it was bound to make it known, as we learn from the law in Lev. v. 1, cf. Prov. xxix. 24. To augment the curse in the present case the money was solemnly consecrated to Jehovah; it became *taboo*, and the thief could not make use of it without incurring the Deity's retaliation. The curse could not be withdrawn, but it might be neutralized by a blessing.

3. *from my hand for my son*] LXX. cod. A and Luc. reads *from*

image and a molten image: now therefore I will restore it
unto thee. And when he restored the money unto his 4
mother, his mother took two hundred *pieces* of silver, and
gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image
and a molten image: and it was in the house of Micah.
And the man Micah had an house of [1]gods, and he made 5

[1] Or, *God*

my hand alone, with a slight change in the Hebr.; i.e. the mother alone, the rightful owner, could carry out the vow; so Moore, Lagrange. But the emphasis on *alone* is not particularly required, and the text may be retained. Following the rearrangement above, the mother, not suspecting who the culprit is, consecrates her money for the benefit of her son.

a graven image and a molten image] According to etymology the one (*pesel*) was carved out of stone or wood, the other (*massēkah*) cast in metal; elsewhere both are named together to denote idols of any kind (Dt. xxvii. 15, Is. xlii. 17); and in usage the etymological distinction was not always observed, a *pesel*, for example, could be cast in gold and silver (Is. xl. 19, xliv. 10). In the present narrative the two words are combined, as though two images were meant; but *v.* 4 *end* and xviii. 20 refer to only one *pesel* in Micah's house, the one which was afterwards set up at Dan, xviii. 30, 31. Probably, therefore, we must take *and a molten image* as an explanatory addition inserted here and in *v.* 4, xviii. 14, 17, 18 by a scribe who thought that *the silver* and *the founder* in *v.* 4 necessarily implied a *massēkah*.

The *pesel* here must have been an image of Jehovah, for it was made of silver which had been consecrated to Him; and the writer, so far from expressing an objection to the thing, records the making of it as a pious act. Throughout the early period images were used in the worship of Jehovah. Golden bull-calves symbolized Jehovah at Dan and Beth-el, 1 Kings xii. 28, cf. Ex. xxxii. 4; the prohibition of molten gods (*massēkah*) in the ancient code Ex. xxxiv. 17] may be aimed at these. It was not till the viiith century that the prophets began to oppose the use of images (Hos. x. 5, 8, xiii. 2, Am. viii. 14); and in agreement with the prophets, the Decalogue forbids an image (*pesel*) of any kind, Ex. xx. 4 E = Dt. v. 8. But while images of Jehovah existed in the various local shrines, we hear of none at Shiloh (xviii. 31) and Jerusalem, where the ark was kept; these sanctuaries had a different character, and probably maintained a higher type of worship.

4. *two hundred* pieces *of silver*] Because the whole sum was given to Jehovah it does not follow that the whole was wanted for the image. Elsewhere *the founder* is a maker of idols, Is. xl. 19, xli. 7.

5. *had an house of gods*] But according to his lights Micah was a zealous worshipper of Jehovah; so follow Marg. *had an house of* **God**, i.e. a private shrine. The narrative hardly permits the identification of Micah's *beth-elohim* with Beth-el, as has been proposed; nor does it

an ephod, and teraphim, and [1]consecrated one of his sons,
6 who became his priest. In those days there was no king in
Israel: every man did that which was right in his own
eyes.

[1] Heb. *filled the hand of.*

intend to brand his shrine, and the sanctuary at Dan, as idolatrous foundations.

an ephod and teraphim] Instruments for consulting the divine oracle; 1 Sam. xxiii. 9—12, Zech. x. 2. In Hos. iii. 4 they are mentioned, together with sacrifice and pillar, in a way which suggests that they were to be found in public sanctuaries. Such was the case with the ephod, viii. 27 *note*; but the terāphim as a rule seem to have been household *sacra*, perhaps images shaped in human form (Gen. xxxi. 19, 34 f.; 1 Sam. xix. 13, 16), associated with superstitious practices such as divination and witchcraft, and therefore discountenanced by the higher religion; Gen. xxxv. 2, 4 E; 1 Sam. xv. 23; 2 Kings xxiii. 24; Ezek. xxi. 21[1]. The archaic miniature idols, generally figures of Ashtoreth, which have been unearthed at Taanach and Gezer, are supposed to have been terāphim, but without much probability. See the illustrations in Vincent, *Canaan*, pp. 153 ff.; Driver, *Schweich Lectures*, p. 57. Gressmann, *Eschatologie*, p. 345 *n.*, accepts the view that if the ephod was the mantle, the terāphim were the masks of the sacred image; the priest put them on to deliver an oracle, and was then supposed to be invested with the power of the Deity. But this does not seem to explain the private, domestic use of the terāphim. The etymology and meaning of the word are unknown; it occurs only in the plural, even when referring to a single object (e.g. 1 Sam. xix. 13, 16); see Gesenius-Kautzsch, *Hebr. Gram.*[28], §124 *h*, Meyer, *Die Israeliten*, p. 212.

and consecrated one of his sons] *v.* 12, **installed** lit. *filled the hand of.* The idiom probably originated from the custom of filling the hands of a candidate for the priestly office with choice portions of the sacrifice, if we may suppose that the ceremonial enjoined in P was based upon traditional usage; Ex. xxix. 22—25, Lev. viii. 25—28; cf. 2 Chron. xiii. 9, 1 Kings xiii. 33. In Ezek. xliii. 26 the phrase has become entirely conventionalized, and is applied to the altar (lit. *fill ye its hand*). An exact equivalent was used in Assyrian for conferring a dignity on a person, e.g. the god Ashur 'filled his hand with a matchless kingdom,' *KB.* i. p. 191.

The verse throws a valuable light on the religious practice of the period. The head of a family could install a son as priest to his household (cf. 1 Sam. vii. 1, 2 Sam. viii. 18), and the priestly office was not confined to Levites (cf. 1 Sam. ii. 18, iii. 1, vii. 9 f. etc., 2 Sam. xx.

[1] The Jerusalem Targum on Gen. xxxi. 19 thus explains what the terāphim were: 'they kill a first-born male and cut off his head, and salt it in salt and spices, and write spells on a leaf of gold which they place under the tongue, and set it up on the wall, and it speaks with them.' This barbarous magic must actually have existed in popular practice.

And there was a young man out of Beth-lehem-judah, of 7
the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned

26), though a Levite was considered to possess superior skill and fitness for it, *v.* 13. Of course this was entirely at variance with later theory and custom. In Deuteronomy (viith century) the only priests we hear of are the Levites, and according to the compiler of the Book of Kings none but Levites had the right to exercise priestly functions (1 Kings xii. 31, xiii. 33); all Levites might be priests (Deut. x. 8 f., xviii. 1—8). In the following age Ezekiel draws a distinction between Levites, and confines the priesthood to the descendants of Zadok, degrading the rest to the rank of priests' servants (Ezek. xliv. 10—16); while finally, according to the Priestly Code, only the descendants of Aaron can be priests (Exod. xxviii., Num. iii. 10, etc.). A later scribe, familiar with what had become the established rule in his day, draws attention to the irregularity in the present case, and puts it down to the general lack of order in the days before the monarchy; cf. xviii. 1, xix. 1, xxi. 25. The remark implies that the scribe who added it was writing ?' time when there were kings in Israel.

7. *a young man...sojourned there*] i.e. in the neighbourhood of Micah's house. Technically the word *sojourner* (Hebr. *gēr*) means one who lives under the protection of a tribe to which he does not belong by birth. This *young man*, a Levite of Judah, was settled in the place where Micah lived, became intimate with him (*v.* 11 b), and was installed as his domestic priest (*v.* 12 a); we hear of *the young man* again in xviii. 3, 15. He cannot be the same person as the wandering Levite, also of Judah, called *the man* in *v.* 8, who in the course of his journey in search of employment, happened to arrive at Micah's house, and for a fixed stipend agreed to take up his abode there (*vv.* 8—11 a, 12 b—13); his subsequent history is given in xviii. 4—6, 18—30. It is evident that two parallel narratives are interwoven here without altogether losing their distinctive features.

of Beth-lehem-judah, of the family of Judah...a Levite] Beth-lehem was a centre for Levites at this time, cf. *v.* 8, xix. 1, 18. The memory of a connexion between certain Levitical families and the southern clans has been preserved by the genealogies: thus among the Levitical families mentioned in Num. xxvi. 58, the Libnites, Hebronites, Korahites are named after places in the territory of Judah (Josh. xv. 42, xxi. 13; 1 Chr. ii. 43).

How could *the young man* have belonged to the family of Judah and at the same time have been a Levite? (*a*) Wellhausen and Moore think that at this period *Levite* was the designation not of a tribe, but of a priestly caste open to any one[1]. The young man is described as a Judaean by birth and a Levite by profession; for 'in early times it was not the pedigree, but the art, that was the essential thing' (Moore). The old tribe of Levi had been broken up (see Gen. xxxiv., xlix. 5—7); the scattered members of it followed the priestly calling; out of this

[1] So Driver, *Exodus*, p. 29, in agreement with McNeile, *Exodus*, p. lxvi. f.

8 there. And the man departed out of the city, out of Beth-
lehem-judah, to sojourn where he could find *a place*: and
he came to the hill country of Ephraim to the house of
9 Micah, as he journeyed. And Micah said unto him,
Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, I am
a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, and I go to sojourn where
10 I may find *a place*. And Micah said unto him, Dwell with
me, and be unto me a father and a priest, and I will give
thee ten *pieces* of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel,

nucleus a priestly 'tribe' of Levi was created by a genealogical fiction. (*b*) There may be some error in the text. The LXX. cod. B omits the first *Judah*; the Peshitto omits *of the family of Judah*, merely, no doubt, because the description seemed unintelligible Budde, however, suggests that the text has deliberately been altered: originally it ran *of the family of Moses*, and this was afterwards modified out of respect for the traditional founder of the priesthood. A certain amount of support for such an alteration is given by xviii. 30; but *Judah* is hardly the name which would obviously occur as a substitute for *Moses*. It seems best after all to take the text as it stands, and to suppose that there was a time when 'Levite' was the official title of one who had received the training of a priest, regardless of the tribe to which he belonged by birth (McNeile). The evidence suggests that the scattered members of the tribe of Levi, like those of Simeon, had attached themselves to the Judaean settlements. The break up of these two tribes is accounted for in Gen. xxxiv., xlix. 5—7, which refer to an episode apparently in the early days of the occupation of Canaan, and therefore not far removed in date from the present narrative. How the Levi of this ugly story came to be the priestly tribe is one of the obscure problems of Hebrew history; see *HDB.* s.v. Levi. Judah is here a *family*, the term applied to the small clan of the Danites (xiii. 2 *n.*). It was not till later, probably not before the time of David, that the *family* of Judah grew into *the tribe*; Beth-lehem and the neighbourhood was most likely its ancient seat.

8. *And the man departed*] Here comes the wandering Levite, who, in the course of his travels, arrives at Micah's house; he is the counterpart of *the young man* already settled there. This narrative no doubt began with some such words as 'Now there was a Levite out of Beth-lehem-judah,' which naturally would not be repeated after *v.* 7, though *out of Beth-lehem-judah* had to be retained. *Vv.* 9—11 a, 12 a continue the story.

10. *father*] A title of honour given to a priest xviii. 19, a counsellor Gen. xlv. 8, cf. [Apocr.] Esther xvi. 11, 1 Macc. xi. 32, a prophet 2 Kings ii. 12, vi. 21, a master 2 Kings v. 13, a king 1 Sam. xxiv. 11.

ten pieces *of silver...victuals*] The Levite has to seek a home and maintenance; and he receives a payment of money for his services, cf. 1 Sam. ii. 36. At the more important sanctuaries, however,

and thy victuals. So the Levite went in. And the Levite 11
was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was
unto him as one of his sons. And Micah consecrated the 12
Levite, and the young man became his priest, and was in
the house of Micah. Then said Micah, Now know I that 13
the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my
priest.

In those days there was no king in Israel: and in those 18
days the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to
dwell in; for unto that day *their* inheritance had not fallen

or when the cultus was more developed, the priests derived their income from portions of the sacrifices and offerings, cf. 1 Sam. ii. 13 ff., 28. This was the rule in the Babylonian and Phoenician cults, and the Deuteronomic law reflects a similar custom: 'no portion nor inheritance' is allowed to the Levitical priests (Dt. x. 9 etc., cf. Num. xviii. 23 P); they are dependent upon firstfruits, sacrificial feasts, tithes; and their support is a moral charge on the community, Dt. xii. 18 f., xiv. 25—29, xvi. 11, xviii. 1—8. In a supplementary law of the Priestly Code a change was introduced, and 48 cities were assigned to the Levites (Num. xxxv. 1—8, Josh. xxi. 1—42), but there is no evidence that this regulation was ever carried out.

So the Levite went in] Hebr. *went away, departed*, as in *v.* 8; but this gives a wrong sense. Moreover, no writer could have composed anything so clumsy as *and the Levite departed, and the Levite was content* (*v.* 11). The first phrase may be a stray fragment of one of the two narratives, or it is merely a doublet of the phrase which follows (Studer and others). The Vulg. omits *and the L. departed*; the LXX. in *v.* 11 reads *and he was content.*

11 b. *and the young man was*] Continuing *v.* 7.

12 a. *consecrated*] **installed**, *v.* 5 *n.*, continuing 11 b: *and was in the house of M.* continues 11 a.

13. This verse may belong to either of the two narratives.

xviii. 1. *In those days...in Israel*] An excuse for the irregularity of Micah's proceedings as described in the foregoing verses. See xvii. 6 *n.*

and in those days...to dwell in] At first the Danites tried to settle on the low land between the coast and the hills (i. 34). Then they were forced into the hills (*ib.*), and we find them, both in this ch. and in the story of Samson, settled at Zorah and Eshtaol, on the W. of Judah. Now comes a migration to the sources of the Jordan in the North, cf. Josh. xix. 47 JE. As we have seen, ch. v. 17 implies that Dan was already established in its northern home at the time of Deborah; the present narrative therefore carries us back to the early days.

for unto that day...of Israel] On the theory of an allotment of territory among the tribes (Josh. xiii.—xxiv.), a wholly different reason for the migration is suggested by these words; note the technical *fallen*, i.e. by lot, cf. Num. xxxiv. 2, Josh. xvii. 5, Ezek. xlvii. 14: obviously the

2 unto them among the tribes of Israel. And the children of
Dan sent of their family five men from their whole number,
men of valour, from Zorah, and from Eshtaol, to spy out the
land, and to search it; and they said unto them, Go, search
the land: and they came to the hill country of Ephraim,
3 unto the house of Micah, and lodged there. When they
were by the house of Micah, they knew the voice of the
young man the Levite: and they turned aside thither, and
said unto him, Who brought thee hither? and what doest
4 thou in this place? and what hast thou here? And he said
unto them, Thus and thus hath Micah dealt with me, and
5 he hath hired me, and I am become his priest. And they
said unto him, Ask counsel, we pray thee, of God, that we
may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous.
6 And the priest said unto them, Go in peace: before the
LORD is your way wherein ye go.
7 Then the five men departed, and came to Laish, and saw

comment of a later hand. The awkwardness of the original is disguised by the RV.

2. The repetitions in this verse (*of their family, of their whole number*; *five men, men* of valour; to *search* it, *search* the land) point to a combination of the two narratives, of which the beginning can be traced in ch. xvii.

3. *When they were by the house of Micah*] repeats what has just been said in *v.* 2; this verse must belong to the narrative of *the young man the Levite* xvii. 7, 11 b, 12 a. Before he made his home with Micah, the young Levite lived, if not at Beth-lehem (his connexion with Beth-lehem xvii. 7 is questioned by Moore), then in the neighbourhood of the Danite villages; hence the spies were acquainted with him. Transl. *They were by the house of M., when they recognized*: cf. 1 Sam. ix. 11, 1 Kings xiv. 17 b in Hebr.

4. *and he hath hired me*] points to xvii. 10, 11 a; so a continuation of that narrative.

5. *Ask counsel...of God*] i.e. by means of the ephod or sacred lot. To consult the divine will in this way was one of the special functions of the priesthood; see 1 Sam. vi. 2, xiv. 18 (RVm.), xxii. 10, xxiii. 9—12 etc. So long as sacrificial acts were freely performed by laymen, the chief distinction of the priest doubtless lay in his qualification to give an oracle: W. R Smith, *OTJC.*, p. 292.

6. *before the LORD*] i.e. under His favourable regard. Cf. 1 Sam. i. 17, 1 Kings xxii. 6 for similar responses.

7. *Laish*] In Josh. xix. 47 Leshem. After the place was occupied by the Danites and re-named, it became the most northerly of Israelite settlements; cf. 2 Sam. xxiv. 6, Jer. iv. 15, and the expression 'from

the people that were therein, how they dwelt in security, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; for there was none in the land, possessing [1]authority, [2]that might put *them* to shame in any thing, and they were far from the Zidonians, and had no dealings with any man. And they 8 came unto their brethren to Zorah and Eshtaol: and their

[1] Heb. *power of restraint.* [2] Or, *that might do any hurt*

Dan to Beer-sheba' xx. 1, 1 Sam. iii. 20 etc. Josephus defines the situation of Laish-Dan as 'near the springs of the lesser Jordan' (*Ant.* viii. 8, 4, cf. i. 10, 1; v. 3, 1). Does this mean the source at Tell el-Ḳāḍi, or the other source 3½ m. to the S.E., at Bānias (the Caesarea Philippi of the Gospels[1])? Most authorities adopt the identification with Tell el-Ḳāḍi, where the Jordan, at this point called by the Arabs Nahr Leddan, gushes in powerful volume out of the western side of the Tell. G. A. Smith, however, prefers the other site (*Hist. Geogr.*, pp. 473, 480 f.). In the background of the district rises the imposing snow-capped mountain of Hermon; cf. Ps. xlii. 6. The modern names Tell el-Ḳāḍi (Ḳāḍi = Dan = judge) and Nahr Leddan may preserve a reminiscence of ancient associations, but we cannot be sure.

the people...how they dwelt in security] So LXX., correcting the text; *how they dwelt* is fem. and cannot agree with *the people* (mas.). Either, then, read the verb as mas., or suppose that the text originally ran 'and they found the city inhabited (lit. *sitting*, cf. Is. xlvii. 8, Zeph. ii. 15) in security, and the people that were therein...quiet and secure.'

after the manner of the Zidonians] **of Zidonians**; the civilization was Phoenician in character. Apparently Laish was a dependency of Zidon (cf. *v.* 28). Though remote from the suzerain city, the inhabitants felt secure enough, and never suspected attack from outside.

for there was...in any thing] The text is overloaded and partially corrupt. Read perhaps ...*quiet and secure, and there was no want of any thing that is in the earth* (as in *v.* 10), *in possession of wealth* (?). The phrase *possessing authority*, lit. *restraint* (?) cannot be right. The LXX. took the word rendered *restraint* (?), i.e. *'eṣer*, to mean *treasure*, i.e. *'ôṣar*; altering one letter we might read *'osher = wealth*, but the corruption may well be deeper.

with any man] The LXX., cod. A and Luc., reads *with Syria*, i.e. *Aram* for *adam*. The change is not necessary but it gives more force to the expression. The people of Laish were not only far from the friendly power of Phoenicia, but they had not allied themselves with their Syrian neighbours (cf. 2 Sam. x. 6); this explains more distinctly why they fell such an easy prey to the Danites.

[1] The reference in Eusebius, *Onomasticon* 275, 33 and 249, 32 is not decisive.

9 brethren said unto them, What *say* ye? And they said,
Arise, and let us go up against them: for we have seen the
land, and, behold, it is very good: and are ye still? be not
10 slothful to go and to enter in to possess the land. When ye
go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and the land is large
for God hath given it into your hand; a place where there
is no want of any thing that is in the earth.
11 And there set forth from thence of the family of the
Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men
12 girt with weapons of war. And they went up, and encamped
in Kiriath-jearim, in Judah: wherefore they called that place

8. *What* say *ye?*] A verb is wanted, such as the EV. supplies; perhaps *what did ye find?* or *see?* would be better. Moore ingeniously, on the basis of the LXX., *what do ye bring back?*

9, 10. The reply of the spies is overcharged, and the sentences out of logical order, probably owing to the combination of the two narratives. Moore thus separates the two: (*a*) *Arise, and let us go up against them: for when ye come, ye shall come unto a people secure, and the land is large, for it is a place where there is no want of anything that is in the earth;* (*b*) *And they said, We have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good: and are ye still? be not slothful to go and to enter in to possess the land; God hath given it into your hand.* A different arrangement is proposed by Budde, who further points out that we should expect the spies to mention the name of the place which they discovered and urged their clan to seize; accordingly he reads *to Laish* for *against them* in (*a*), and supplies the omission in (*b*). He distinguishes the sources as follows: (*a*) *And they said, Arise and let us go up* [*to Laish*]*; for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good; a place where there is no want of any thing that is in the earth;* (*b*) *And they said,* [*Why*] *are ye still? be not slothful to go* [*to Laish*] *to possess the land, for* [*Jehovah*] *hath given it into your hand. When ye come, ye shall come...is large.* Of the two, Budde's arrangement seems preferable; but it is impossible to reconstruct the sources with any certainty.

and are ye still?] Cf. 1 Kings xxii. 3. Budde's correction, *why* for *and*, is an improvement.

11. *six hundred men*] Not the whole clan, but only the more enterprising members of it; the rest remained behind in the south. The armed men took their women and children with them (*v.* 21); altogether the numbers must have reached a thousand.

12. *Kiriath-jĕārim*] i.e. *city of woods*; cf. Josh. ix. 17 P and 1 Sam. vi. 21, vii. 1 f. Eusebius (*Onom.* 109, 27. 271, 40) places it 9 Roman miles from Jerusalem on the road to Lydda; hence it is generally identified with Ḳirjat el-ʿenab, which is just this distance. The site would fit in well with the present narrative, making the first encampment a short day's march from the Danite seats. The identification cannot be regarded as certain; but there is more to be said for Ḳirjat

[1]Mahaneh-dan, unto this day: behold, it is behind Kiriath-jearim. And they passed thence unto the hill country of 13
Ephraim, and came unto the house of Micah. Then 14
answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye know that there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image? now therefore consider what ye have to do. And they turned aside thither, and came to 15
the house of the young man the Levite, even unto the house of Micah, and asked him of his welfare. And the six 16
hundred men girt with their weapons of war, who were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate. And 17
the five men that went to spy out the land went up, and

[1] See ch. xiii. 25.

el-'enab than for 'Erma, a ruined site to the S.W., which some prefer. 'Erma has nothing whatever to do with *jearim*. *The camp of Dan* is said to have been *behind*, i.e. *west of* Kiriath-jearim; contrast xiii. 25, where it is placed between Zorah and Eshtaol. Local tradition may well have preserved the memory of this first halting-place in an expedition which involved a lasting effect upon the life of the district.

14—18. The repetition of identical phrases leads us to suspect that the text has been encumbered by glosses. To some extent, also, the confusion may be due to the double narrative; note *the young Levite* in *v.* 15 and *the priest* in *vv.* 17, 18; but other criteria fail us, and any clear separation of sources is impossible. The temptation to gloss the passage was no doubt encouraged by the inevitable, but rather clumsy, repetition of defining clauses, such as *an ephod and teraphim*, *the six hundred men*, *the spies* etc. Thus *v.* 16 seems to be wholly an addition; in *v.* 17 *came in thither...molten image* is simply a doublet from *v.* 18.

14. *the country of Laish*] The Hebr. can only be rendered *the country*, *Laish*. Obviously the last word is a marginal note, and it is omitted in some MSS. of the LXX.

in these houses] Apparently Micah's establishment was almost a small village, cf. *v.* 22.

and a molten image] See on xvii. 3.

consider what ye have to do] Cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 17. The Danites recognize that the God of Micah is none other than their own God.

15. *even unto the house of Micah*] A gloss inserted to identify the young Levite's house with that of Micah; see on xvii. 7. LXX. Luc. omits *the house of the young man the Levite*.

16. The whole of this verse seems to be a mistaken repetition of *v.* 17 b; both the grammar and the construction of the sentence are faulty. Budde, however, would transpose the verse to *v.* 18 after *molten image*.

came in thither, and took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood by the entering of the gate with the six hundred men
18 girt with weapons of war. And when these went into Micah's house, and fetched the graven image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image, the priest said
19 unto them, What do ye? And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest: is it better for thee to be priest unto the house of one man, or to be priest unto a tribe
20 and a family in Israel? And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image,
21 and went in the midst of the people. So they turned and

17. *and came in...molten image*] Again, the clumsy and irregular construction as well as the contents of the clause shew that it is not original; a doublet from *v.* 18; lit. *they came in thither, they took*; the RV. inserts *and* twice.

and the priest...with the six hundred] The text seems to say that, while the spies went up to Micah's house, the priest and the 600 armed men stood at the entrance of the village. In *vv.* 18, 19, however, the priest is not at the entrance of the village, but at the door of the house; *with the six hundred* etc. should rather be *and the six hundred men girt with weapons of war...*, an unfinished sentence without a verb. It is impossible to recover the original form of the text here. The general sense intended may be this: while the 600 warriors stood at the entrance of the village, the five spies went up to Micah's house, were confronted by the priest, and, silencing his expostulations, plundered the sanctuary.

by the entering of the gate] Always of the gate of a city (e.g. ix. 35, 44, Josh. viii. 29, xx. 4 etc.), not the door of a house. The use of the expression here implies at least a group of houses, such as a farm, or a village.

The LXX. cod. B has a brief equivalent for *v.* 17, 'and the five men who went to spy out the land went up, (*v.* 18) and entered into Micaiah's house, and the priest was standing [there]; and they fetched' etc. It is doubtful, however, whether this can be taken to represent the original text.

18. *these went into*] i.e. the spies; they knew their way about the house.

the graven image, the ephod] The Hebr. has *the graven image of the ephod*; probably a scribal error; LXX. *the graven image and the ephod.* The last word in the list is not in its usual place; clearly an addition.

19. *lay thine hand upon thy mouth*] Cf. Mic. vii. 16, Job xxi. 5, xxix. 9 etc.

a father and a priest] See xvii. 10 *n.*

departed, and put the little ones and the cattle and the goods before them. When they were a good way from the 22
house of Micah, the men that were in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan. And they cried unto the children of Dan. 23
And they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, What aileth thee, [1]that thou comest with such a company? And 24
he said, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and are gone away, and what have I more? and how then say ye unto me, What aileth thee? And the 25
children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest [2]angry fellows fall upon you, and thou lose thy life, with the lives of thy household. And the children 26
of Dan went their way: and when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back unto his house. And they took that which Micah had made, and the priest 27
which he had, and came unto Laish, unto a people quiet and secure, and smote them with the edge of the sword; and they burnt the city with fire. And there was no 28

[1] Heb. *that thou art gathered together.* [2] Heb. *bitter of soul.*

21. If there were *little ones* there must have been women to look after them. Budde would supply the omission, but unnecessarily.

the goods] In the Hebr. a fem. sing., *the wealth*, cf. Gen. xxxi. 1 RVm., Is. x. 3 (translated *glory*). The LXX. cod. B takes the word in its primary sense 'the *heavy* baggage.'

22. *the men that were in the houses*] The sense is much improved by following the LXX. *behold Micaiah and the men that were* etc. We need some mention of Micah joining the pursuit (*v.* 23).

24. *my gods which I made*] Cf. Gen. xxxi. 30 ff. E, a passage which shews several points of resemblance to the present. For *my gods*, Vulg. deos meos, we might render *my God*, offensive though the idea is to us; Micah was a worshipper of Jehovah, see on xvii. 5. The LXX. paraphrases 'my graven image.'

25. *angry fellows*] See marg.; *fierce-tempered* as in 2 Sam. xvii. 8; cf. also 1 Sam. xxii. 2. The rough humour and insolence of the robbers are admirably described. The writer hardly disguises his relish of the scene.

27. *that which Micah had made*] Perhaps originally *the God which...* as in *v.* 24. The form of the sentence suggests that the objectionable expression has been modified.

28. See on *v.* 7. The city was too far off from the suzerain power to obtain any help; and as no alliances had been made with the Syrians

deliverer, because it was far from Zidon, and they had no dealings with any man; and it was in the valley that lieth by Beth-rehob. And they built the city, and dwelt therein.
29 And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born unto Israel: howbeit the name
30 of the city was Laish at the first. And the children of Dan set up for themselves the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of [1]Moses, he and his sons were

[1] Another reading is, *Manasseh.*

(again reading *Aram* for *adam* = 'any man'), there were no friendly neighbours to come to the rescue.

the valley that lieth by Beth-rehob] or *that belongeth to B.* The depression through which the Jordan flows begins to open out at the S.W. foot of Hermon; this seems to be *the valley* alluded to. If, as is probable, Laish-Dan occupied the site of Tell el-Ḳāḍi, Beth-rehob may be identified with Bānias. According to 2 Sam. x. 6, 8 Beth-rehob was a Syrian state.

29. *howbeit...at the first*] The same formula in Gen. xxviii. 19 E; here evidently an editorial, later addition, together with *who was born unto Israel.*

30. The object of the whole story has been to trace the origin of the famous sanctuary at Dan. In this and the next verse the setting up of Micah's image is told twice over, and a double note of time is given. The repetition suggests that we have here the two conclusions of the two narratives which have been woven together in the story. Moore thinks that *v.* 30 belongs to the narrative which alludes to *the man—the Levite—the priest* (xvii. 8, 11 a, 12 b, xviii. 3 b, 4—6, 18 b etc.), whose name now turns out to have been Jonathan, a grandson of Moses, and that *v.* 31 closes the other document, of which a characteristic feature is *the young Levite* (xvii. 7, 11 b, 12 a, xviii. 3, 15 etc.). This may be so, but no kind of certainty is possible. The name of the Levite comes rather oddly at the end, instead of at the beginning of the story. If the original narrator had wished to mention it, he would have done so at xvii. 8; the omission is now supplied, apparently by a later hand. Thus the second half of *v.* 30 seems to be an editorial addition.

the graven image] Only one image is mentioned in the sequel; see on xvii. 3.

Jonathan...Moses] The Levite and his descendants, the priests of Dan, claimed descent from Moses. The margin notes another reading; in the Hebr. text the letter *n* is 'suspended,' or inserted above the line, thus turning *Mosheh* (משה) into *Manasseh* (מנשה). The Jews admit that the text was altered in order to repudiate the Levite's claim; he acted, not like a son of Moses, but like the impious king Manasseh, to whom the Rabbis apply the principle, 'every corruption is fastened upon (i.e. is named after) him who started it'; Talm. Bab.

priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land. So they set them up Micah's graven 31
image which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

Baba Bathra 109 b. Possibly the Jewish scribes had another Manasseh in their minds, the renegade priest who first ministered in the Samaritan temple on Mt Gerizim; Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 8, 2 ff. The LXX. reads *Manasseh* (a group of cursives both *Moses* and *Manasseh*); the Vulg. *Moysi*; the Syr. *Manasseh*. For Gershom see Ex. ii. 22, xviii. 3.

until the day of the captivity of the land] Either the captivity of N. Israel under Tiglath-pileser in 734 B.C., 2 Kings xv. 29; or the exile after the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C., *ib.* xvii. 6 ff.

31. This verse is clearly not by the same hand as the foregoing.

the house of God...in Shiloh] Not a tabernacle, or moveable tent, but a temple; see 1 Sam. i. 7, 24, iii. 15. We are not told when the temple in Shiloh came to an end; was it when the ark fell into the hands of the Philistines, 1 Sam. iv.? In the time of Saul the descendants of Eli are found not at Shiloh, but at Nob, *ib.* xxi. 2 ff. Or was it during the Assyrian wars? The allusions in Jer. vii. 12, 14, xxvi. 6, 9 suggest a comparatively recent and well-remembered disaster. At any rate the writer does not say that the Danite shrine disappeared when the temple in Shiloh came to an end; what he means is that the local cult existed side by side with the national sanctuary. Cf. further 1 Kings xii. 29 f., Amos viii. 14.

Appendix II. Chs. xix.—xxi. The war against Benjamin.

The First Appendix deals with the early fortunes of Dan, the Second with an episode in the history of Benjamin. In consequence of an abominable outrage committed by the Benjamites of Gibeah, all Israel determines to take vengeance on the offending tribe. A vast army assembles at Mizpah; in the battles which follow the Israelites at first suffer heavily, but in the end the Benjamites are defeated and nearly exterminated. Such a disaster, however, as the total loss of one of the twelve tribes was not to be thought of; in a revulsion of feeling the Israelites recommend a plan for saving Benjamin from its fate.

In parts these chapters bear obvious marks of antiquity: (*a*) the account of the outrage ch. xix., and (*b*) the account of the rape xxi. 15—23 remind us of chs. xvii. and xviii., both by the vivid style of the narrative and by the state of manners and religion which comes to light. On the other hand, (*c*) the account of the vengeance xx., xxi. 2—14, though parts of ch. xx. are ancient, contradicts what we know from elsewhere about the history of this period. Instead of the tribes acting independently, and local chiefs rousing their own clans and allies, here we have all Israel acting together, without any head or leader, *as one man* (xx. 1, 8), under a common impulse. Israel in fact has become a religious community (note *the congregation* xx. 1, xxi. 13, *the elders*

19 And it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the farther side of the hill country of Ephraim, who took

xxi. 16 a), filled with holy zeal against sin, dutifully dependent upon Jehovah, and jealous for the sacred unity of the Twelve Tribes. The whole conception is foreign to the life of old Israel as described in the historical books from Judges to Kings; it represents the ideal of a much later time, after the Priestly Code had come into operation. Then again, the numbers are clearly exaggerated; the mere sending round of the gruesome summons is enough to bring 400,000 men from Dan to Beer-sheba and from the land of Gilead; 26,700 Benjamites gather to meet them; on the first day 22,000 Israelites are killed, 18,000 on the second; on the third, the Benjamites themselves lose 25,100 (xx. 35), leaving 600 survivors (*ib.* 47). This fondness for large numbers is characteristic of the Chronicler; moreover, certain features of style and language connect this part of the narrative with the Priestly Code, Chronicles, and the later literature (see notes on xx. 1, 6, 13, 15, 33, xxi. 11, 12, 23). The war of vengeance against the Midianites in Num. xxxi. (from a late stratum of P) may be regarded as a narrative of the same character as this. We may conclude, therefore, that an ancient story has been enlarged and recast at a period long after the age of the events. Generations of story-tellers may have heightened the original facts; more probably, perhaps, a writer belonging to the school of the Chronicler created out of them a midrash or instructive tale. There is no reason, however, to doubt that a basis of fact underlies the story. The expression 'in those days there was no king in Israel,' which forms a link between the two Appendices (xvii. 6, xviii. 1, xix. 1, xxi. 25), must come from a writer who lived before the exile; and it is noteworthy that the expression occurs in connexion with those parts of the story, chs. xix. and xxi 15—23, which on other grounds appear to be ancient. When these events took place we are not told: xx. 27 b, 28 a is a manifest gloss; probably the episode belonged to the early stage of Israel's occupation of Canaan, and this is the period in which Josephus places it (*Ant.* v. 2, 8—12). The older element in the story seems to consist of ch. xix. (with additions here and there); xx. 1 a, d, 3—8, 14, 19, 29, 36 b, 37 a, 38—41, 44 a, 47; xxi. 1, 15—23 (in the main). The early narrative itself is thought to betray signs of composite structure, especially in xix. 6—15; but the analysis is difficult and uncertain.

Ch. xix. *The outrage at Gibeah.*

1. *when there was no king*] See on xvii. 6.

on the farther side] or *recesses*, probably meaning the northern parts of E.; cf. *the recesses of Lebanon* 2 Kings xix. 23, also Is. xiv. 13, Jer. vi. 22 etc. Like his fellow in App. i., this Levite is a *sojourner*, and he has a connexion with Beth-lehem of Judah. See on xvii. 7. No doubt he was serving a local sanctuary in some remote quarter of Ephraim.

to him a concubine out of Beth-lehem-judah. And his 2
concubine played the harlot against him, and went away
from him unto her father's house to Beth-lehem-judah, and
was there the space of four months. And her husband arose, 3
and went after her, to speak [1]kindly unto her, to bring [2]her
again, having his servant with him, and a couple of asses:
and she brought him into her father's house: and when the
father of the damsel saw him, he rejoiced to meet him.
And his father in law, the damsel's father, retained him; 4

[1] Heb. *to her heart.* [2] Another reading is, *it*, that is, her heart.

a concubine] The relationship was sanctioned by custom, cf. viii. 31, Gen. xxii. 24, xxv. 6 etc.; it was regarded as a real marriage, as the sequel shews. The Hebr. word (=Gk. παλλακίς, Lat. *pellex*) appears to be foreign and not of Semitic origin; we may infer that originally it was applied to female slaves captured from foreigners, or not of native race.

2. *played the harlot against him*] The text is open to suspicion. LXX. cod. A reads *was angry with him*; this suits the context, which implies a quarrel, but not unfaithfulness, on the woman's part; she left him in anger and returned to her father's house, whither the Levite followed to pacify her (*v.* 3 f.). How are we to account for the reading of the text? Moore ingeniously suggests that by the transposition of two letters *she was angry* (*te'ĕnaph*) might have become 'she committed adultery' (*tin'aph*), which was altered by the Jews to 'played the harlot,' on the ground that only a wedded wife could be said to commit adultery. It is simpler to suppose that the original *she was angry* was deliberately altered under a misconception of the relationship.

the space of four months] lit. *days, four months*; *days* sometimes has the specific sense of *a year*, e.g. 1 Sam. xxvii. 7 'a full year and four months'; cf. ch. xvii. 10 'by the year,' lit. 'by the days.' But *days* can also have an indefinite sense, *some time*, as probably here.

3. *to speak kindly unto her*] See marg., and cf. Gen. xxxiv. 3, l. 21, Is. xl. 2.

to bring her again] More natural than the alternative reading given in the marg.

a couple of asses] for the necessaries of the journey; by Eastern custom the woman would be expected to walk, *v.* 10.

and she brought him] implies that the reconciliation has taken place; but as nothing is said about this, many prefer to read with LXX. cod. A *and he went.*

he rejoiced] Evidently the Levite was considered to be a desirable son in law, and he had come back to claim his property.

4. *retained him*] or *laid hold on him* to prevent him from going away, cf. vii. 8. The pressing and rather boisterous hospitality of the girl's father has a tragic significance in view of what follows, hence it is

and he abode with him three days: so they did eat and
5 drink, and lodged there. And it came to pass on the fourth
day, that they arose early in the morning, and he rose up
to depart: and the damsel's father said unto his son in law,
Comfort thine heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward
6 ye shall go your way. So they sat down, and did eat and
drink, both of them together: and the damsel's father said
unto the man, Be content, I pray thee, and tarry all night,
7 and let thine heart be merry. And the man rose up to
depart; but his father in law urged him, and he lodged there

emphasized from the beginning. There is no need to add *and brought him in* with some MSS. of LXX., for the Levite has already entered the house, *v.* 3.

5. The doublets and repetitions in this and the following verses may at first sight appear to be due to the carelessness of a narrator who did not pay much attention to literary correctness; more probably, however, they are to be accounted for, as in similar cases elsewhere, by the combination of two sources. Although other parts of this chapter seem to be fairly homogeneous, yet at this point indications of fusion become apparent. Thus the same request is repeated four times *vv.* 5, 6, 8, 9; *father of the damsel* (*vv.* 3, 6, 8) seems to be a duplicate of *his father in law* (*v.* 7), both being combined in *v.* 4; a similar doubling of phraseology appears in *comfort thine heart* (*vv.* 5, 8) and *let thine heart be merry* (*vv.* 6, 9); in *they did eat and drink* (*v.* 4) and *they did eat, both of them* (*v.* 8), combined in *v.* 6; in *Behold, now the day draweth toward evening* and *behold, the day groweth to an end* in *v.* 9. This last verse, the text of which is open to question here and there, shews a curious alternation of singular and plural, not always apparent in English; *tarry all night* is plural, *lodge here*, the same word in Hebrew, is singular; *get you early on your way* and *that thou mayest go to thy tents*; the one account seems to have used singular verbs and pronouns, the other plural; similarly here, *v.* 5, *they arose early* and *he rose up*. Again, it would appear that according to one version the Levite was persuaded to stay for three days (*v.* 4) and then for a fourth (*v.* 5), while the other version seems to imply that he intended to leave on the day of his arrival, but remained for one night as his father in law urged him (*vv.* 6 b, 7); *on the fifth day* (*v.* 8) may then be due to the editor who united the documents (Moore). Fortunately these redundancies do not obscure the purpose of this part of the story, which is to explain how it happened that the Levite and his belongings arrived at Gibeah so late in the day.

Comfort thine heart with a morsel of bread] The same expressions as in Gen. xviii. 5 J; *comfort* in the old English sense of *strengthen*, as the verb is rendered in Ps. civ. 15.

7. *urged him*] In spite of the entreaty (*v.* 6), the Levite determines to go; he only yields to strong pressure; cf. Gen. xix. 3.

again. And he arose early in the morning on the fifth day 8
to depart; and the damsel's father said, Comfort thine
heart, I pray thee, and tarry ye until the day declineth; and
they did eat, both of them. And when the man rose up to 9
depart, he, and his concubine, and his servant, his father in
law, the damsel's father, said unto him, Behold, now the day
draweth toward evening, I pray you tarry all night: behold,
the day groweth to an end, lodge here, that thine heart
may be merry; and to-morrow get you early on your way,
that thou mayest go [1]home. But the man would not tarry 10
that night, but he rose up and departed, and came over
against Jebus (the same is Jerusalem): and there were with
him a couple of asses saddled; his concubine also was with
him. When they were by Jebus, the day was far spent; 11
and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee,
and let us turn aside into this city of the Jebusites, and

[1] Heb. *to thy tents.*

8. *on the fifth day*] See note on *v.* 5.

and tarry ye] or *wait*, to avoid confusion with the different word rendered *tarry all night* in *vv.* 6, 9. Some MSS. of the LXX. read *and he enticed him*; hence Moore suggests that the text originally ran *and he enticed him and he* (or *they*) *waited*. By the time that the Levite managed to escape it was late in the afternoon.

9. *Behold, now the day draweth toward evening...behold, the day groweth to an end*] lit. *the day sinks to become evening...the camping-time* (?) *of the day*. The doubling of phrases points to a conflation of sources, while the phrases themselves are too high-flown for a prose narrative. Some MSS. of the LXX. read *Behold, the day is declined* (*v.* 8) *toward evening, lodge thou here to-day also*. Probably this is nearer to the original.

10. *Jebus*] Only here and in 1 Chr. xi. 4, 5 as the old name of Jerusalem. Long before the Israelite occupation, however, the Amarna tablets *c.* 1400 B.C. refer to the city as Urusalim (Nos. 180, 181, 183, 185 Winckler); and the O.T. itself gives early evidence for the antiquity of the name, i. 7, 8, 21, Josh. xv. 63 JE, 2 Sam. v. 6. We are told that the Jebusites lived there, i. 21, Josh. l.c., 2 Sam. l.c., and it may have been possible to speak of *the Jebusite*, meaning Jerusalem (in P, Josh. xv. 8, xviii. 28, 16); but *Jebus* is merely an inference from the name of the inhabitants, not a survival from prehistoric times. Lagrange indeed thinks that the way in which the servant alludes to *this city of the Jebusites* implies that the text originally read *Jerusalem* in *vv.* 10 and 11, and that *Jebus* is due to a copyist who wished to correct the reading in accordance with his theory. See G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, i. pp. 266 f.

12 lodge in it. And his master said unto him, We will not
turn aside into the city of a stranger, [1]that is not of the
13 children of Israel; but we will pass over to Gibeah. And
he said unto his servant, Come and let us draw near to one
of these places; and we will lodge in Gibeah, or in Ramah.
14 So they passed on and went their way; and the sun went
down upon them near to Gibeah, which belongeth to
15 Benjamin. And they turned aside thither, to go in to lodge
in Gibeah: and he went in, and sat him down in the street of
the city: for there was no man that took them into his
16 house to lodge. And, behold, there came an old man from
his work out of the field at even; now the man was of the
hill country of Ephraim, and he sojourned in Gibeah: but
17 the men of the place were Benjamites. And he lifted up
his eyes, and saw the wayfaring man in the street of the city;
and the old man said, Whither goest thou? and whence
18 comest thou? And he said unto him, We are passing from
Beth-lehem-judah unto the farther side of the hill country of
Ephraim; from thence am I, and I went to Beth-lehem-
judah: [2]and I am *now* going to the house of the LORD;

[1] Or, *where there are none of the children of Israel*
[2] The Sept. has, *and I am going to my house.*

12. The text is to be preferred to the marg.; but *that is not* should be construed with *a stranger* rather than with *the city*.

13. *Gibeah*] Here, as in Is. x. 29 b, clearly south of Ramah, now er-Rām; it may well have occupied the ruined site called Tell el-Fūl, $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles N. of Jerusalem. This is the Gibeah of Saul mentioned in 1 Sam. x. 26, xi. 4, xv. 34, Is. l.c. (see Jos., *Wars* v. 2, 1), and known also as G. of Benjamin, 1 Sam. xiii. 2, 15, xiv. 16. It is to be distinguished from Geba, 1 Sam. xiv. 5, Is. x. 29 a etc., now Jeba', E. of er-Rām. The name = *hill* was a common one (e.g. Josh. xv. 57 in Judah, *ib.* xxiv. 33 RVm. in Ephraim), and easily leads to confusion.

15. *and he went in, and sat him down*] The verbs should probably be read as plurals.

the street] Rather **broad place** (*vv.* 17, 20), Gen. xix. 2 b, usually near the gate, 2 Chr. xxxii. 6, Neh. viii. 1, 3, 16 etc. At this point we begin to notice parallels with Gen. xix.

16. *and he sojourned*] Cf. xvii. 7 *n.* The only person that paid any attention to the travellers was not a native of the place: it was the same at Sodom, Gen. xix. 1 f. The last words of the verse are a topographical gloss, cf. xxi. 19.

18. *the farther side*] See on *v.* 1.

and there is no man that taketh me into his house. Yet 19
there is both straw and provender for our asses; and there
is bread and wine also for me, and for thy handmaid, and
for the young man which is with thy servants: there is no
want of any thing. And the old man said, Peace be unto 20
thee; howsoever let all thy wants lie upon me; only lodge
not in the street. So he brought him into his house, and 21
gave the asses fodder: and they washed their feet, and did
eat and drink. As they were making their hearts merry, 22
behold, the men of the city, certain [1]sons of [2]Belial, beset the
house round about, beating at the door; and they spake to
the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the

[1] Or, *base fellows* [2] That is, *worthlessness.*

the house of the LORD] The marg. is to be preferred; the last letter of *bêthî = my house* was taken as the initial of the divine name *Yahweh*. A converse mistake occurs in Jer. vi. 11, where *fury of Yahweh* has become *my fury* in the LXX. There is nothing in the context to suggest that the Levite was going to Shiloh.

19. *straw and provender*] Similarly Gen. xxiv. 25. After *straw*, *provender* probably denotes grain.

there is no want of any thing] Cf. xviii. 10.

22. *sons of Belial*] Marg. *sons of worthlessness*, as in xx. 13, Dt. xiii. 13, 1 Sam. xxv. 17, 25 etc., taking Belial (*beliy-ya'al*) as compounded of *belî = not* and *ya'al = ? profit*, though a noun *ya'al* does not occur; *worthlessness* is not strong enough: the expression denotes low-minded, unprincipled characters, *vile scoundrels* (Moore), and this is how the LXX. understands it. But a different interpretation is given in some ancient versions; Theodotion here and the LXX. cod. A in xx. 13 take the second word as a proper name, *sons of Beliam*; so occasionally the Vulg., *filii Belial*, followed by the AV., RV. In the N.T. Belial has become a synonym for Satan, 2 Cor. vi. 15, and in this sense the word is used in apocalyptic literature, e.g. *Jubilees*, *Test. xii. Patriarchs*, *Sibylline Oracles*. Although Belial is not interpreted as a proper name till a late period, yet originally perhaps it had this significance. Cheyne (*Encycl. Bibl.* col. 526 f.) seeks the origin of the name in popular mythology, and adopts the derivation *belî-ya'aleh* = '(that from which) one comes not up again,' i.e Sheol, or the demon of the abyss; cf. the Babylonian name for the underworld *irṣît la tari* = 'land without return.' This explanation is certainly appropriate in Ps. xviii. 4 = 2 Sam. xxii. 5 *floods of Belial*, and, with an extension of meaning, in Ps. xli. 8, ci. 3 lit. *a thing of B.*, Nah. i. 11 RVm.; we have then to suppose that the abyss, or the demon of the abyss, came to represent a power or quality of gross wickedness. Cheyne's view is ingenious and we must allow that the usual explanation rests upon a doubtful etymology.

man that came into thine house, that we may know him.
23 And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them,
and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, I pray you, do not
so wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house,
24 do not this folly. Behold, here is my daughter a maiden,
and his concubine; them I will bring out now, and humble
ye them, and do with them what seemeth good unto you:
25 but unto this man do not any such folly. But the men
would not hearken to him: so the man laid hold on his
concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they
knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning:

beset the house...know him] The same words in Gen. xix. 4, 5. It looks as if the present narrative had been deliberately conformed here and there to the description of the immorality of the Sodomites. This is certainly the case in *v.* 24, where the phrases are identical with those in Gen. xix. 8. Some scholars think that the present verse originally read *Bring forth the woman...that we may know her*, chiefly on the ground that in xx. 5 the Levite does not allude to the particular crime mentioned in the text as it stands, but declares that the men of Gibeah wanted to *slay* him. The inconsistency may be more apparent than real. After what happened to the woman, the Levite might well assert that the intention was to kill him, while he would hardly repeat the expression used here.

23. *Nay, my brethren...wickedly*] Similarly Gen. xix. 7.

do not...folly] This translation is only a makeshift. The Hebr. *nebālāh* means much more than *folly*; it implies moral insensibility, repudiation of the claims of morality and religion, particularly, in this phrase, an outrage against the laws of nature, xx. 6, 10, Gen. xxxiv. 7, Deut. xxii. 21, 2 Sam. xiii. 12. In Josh. vii. 15 the phrase is used of Achan's iniquity.

24. The verse is clearly dependent on Gen. xix. 8, and, as Bertheau and Moore think, may be an addition to heighten the resemblance between the two situations. It does not really fit into the context; *and his concubine* is out of place in view of *v.* 25; while the Hebrew exhibits grammatical irregularities which raise a doubt as to the originality of the text. Reading *v.* 25 as the sequel of *v.* 23 the narrative becomes much more intelligible.

As it stands, the verse illustrates the extravagant lengths to which the duties of hospitality could be carried. To save his guest the master of the house is prepared to sacrifice his daughter. Pushed to this extreme, the code of honour becomes a sanction of dishonour. The writer, however, does not question the morality of the proceeding.

25. If the offer of the host strikes us as immoral, the conduct of the Levite makes an even worse impression: he sacrifices his concubine-wife to save himself. The same despicable behaviour appears in the

and when the day began to spring, they let her go. Then 26
came the woman in the dawning of the day, and fell down
at the door of the man's house where her lord was, till it was
light. And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened 27
the doors of the house, and went out to go his way: and,
behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down at the
door of the house, with her hands upon the threshold. And 28
he said unto her, Up, and let us be going; but none
answered: then he took her up upon the ass; and the man
rose up, and gat him unto his place. And when he was 29
come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his
concubine, and divided her, [1]limb by limb, into twelve pieces,
and sent her throughout all the borders of Israel. And it 30
was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such deed

[1] Heb. *according to her bones.*

stories of Abraham and Isaac, Gen. xii. 10 ff. J, xx. E, xxvi. 6—11 J; no blame or condemnation is attached to any one; we must not expect to find even the elements of chivalry in the ancient Hebrew estimate of womanhood. Our standards of morality are inapplicable.

27. With instinctive art the Hebrew story-teller leaves much to the imagination (cf. xi. 39); but at the end of the verse he adds a detail which betrays the pathos of the tragedy.

28. The sheer brutality of the Levite's words prepares us for his savage appeal for vengeance.

but none answered] The LXX. spoils the effect by adding *for she was dead.* Josephus tries to palliate it: 'her husband thought that she was overcome by deep sleep,' *Ant.* v. 2, 8.

29. *and divided her...and sent her throughout all the borders of Israel*] The same words in 1 Sam. xi. 7, possibly implying that the present description has been copied from the other. But the two accounts differ in meaning: Saul's summons was intended to convey a threat, the Levite's to call forth horror. *Divided* is the regular term for cutting up a sacrificial victim, Ex. xxix. 17, Lev. i. 6, 12, 1 Kings xviii. 23, 33.

twelve pieces] Not necessarily referring to the number of the tribes (LXX. cod A); the twelve-fold division of Israel belongs to the later historical theory which finds expression in chs. xx., xxi.

30. After *unto this day* the LXX. cod. A etc. contains an addition which no doubt formed part of the original text. Restoring this addition to its proper place at the beginning of the verse we may read: **And he commanded the men whom he sent, saying, Thus shall ye say to all the men of Israel, Did ever such a thing as this happen, from the day that the children of Israel came up out of Egypt unto this day?** *Consider of it, take counsel, and speak,*

done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day: consider of it, take counsel, and speak.

20 Then all the children of Israel went out, and the congre-

And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day. Note that both clauses end with *unto this day*: the first fell out through homoioteleuton. *Consider of it...speak* is much more suitable as the Levite's message than as the exclamation of those who discussed the summons.

came up out of the land of Egypt] The Exodus is frequently referred to as the birth-day of Israel's national life, cf. vi. 13, 1 Sam. viii. 8, 2 Sam. vii. 6, Am. ii. 10, ix. 7, Mic. vi. 4 etc.

The outrage at Gibeah is referred to in Hos. ix. 9, x. 9, 10. The text of the latter passage is uncertain and difficult; 'their two transgressions' is generally taken as an allusion to the want of hospitality and the immoral conduct of the men of Gibeah. The Targum on Hos. x. 9, however, interprets 'the days of Gibeah' as referring to the setting up of the kingdom in Gibeah in the time of Saul; and some modern scholars accept this view. It is true that Israel, which avenged the crime with such righteous zeal, could not fairly be blamed for it; on the other hand, the Benjamites of Gibeah formed a part of Israel, and the entire nation would, in accordance with ancient ideas, be considered as involved in the guilt (cf. Jud. xx. 10 b). It is not necessary to suppose that Hosea based his allusion on the present narrative; the tradition which he knew may have differed in some respects.

Ch. xx. *The vengeance of Israel.*

The older narrative (A) seems to be contained in xx. 1 a (...*went out*), d (*unto the Lord...*), 3—8, 14, 19, 29, 36 b, 37 a, 38—41, 44 a, 47; it describes the gathering of all the Israelites at Mizpah, their examination of the Levite and resolve to avenge him, the capture of Gibeah by ambush, the slaughter of 18,000 Benjamites. The other and much later narrative (B), xx. 1 b, c, 2, 9—13, 15—18, 20—28, 30—36 a, 37 b, 42—43, 44 b—46, 48, gives a considerably different account, of which the main features are: the confederate action of the Israelite *ecclesia*; the three battles; the enormous numbers. Certain irreconcilable or superfluous elements in this narrative may be due to additions or glosses, e.g. xx. 11, 18, 27 b, 28 a, 31 a. Some scholars detect a third source by subdividing A, but the analysis does not yield very decisive results.

1. *the congregation was assembled*] The two words at once stamp the character of source B; cf. in the Priestly Code Lev. viii. 4, Num. xvi. 42, xx. 2, Josh. xviii. 1, xxii. 12. The *congregation* xxi. 10, 13, 16 (Hebr. *'ēdhah*, LXX. *synagōgē*) is regularly used by P, and by writers under the influence of P, to describe Israel as a religious

gation was assembled as one man, from Dan even to Beer-
sheba, with the land of Gilead, unto the LORD at Mizpah.
And the [1]chiefs of all the people, [2]even of all the tribes of 2
Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people
of God, four hundred thousand footmen that drew sword.

[1] Heb. *corners.* [2] Or, *even all*

community (e.g. Ex. xii. 3, Num. i. 2, Josh. xxii. 16 etc., 1 Kings viii. 5, xii. 20). Less characteristic, but frequently found in the Priestly narrative, is the *assembly v.* 2, xxi. 5, 8 (Hebr. *ḳāhāl*, LXX. usually *ecclesia*, sometimes *synagōgē*), to denote the people as an organized whole (e.g. Dt. xxxi. 30, Lev. xvi. 17, Num. xvi. 3, Ezr. x. 12, 14 etc.), or as assembled for some special purpose, an invasion, or instruction, or worship.

as one man] Cf. *vv.* 8, 11; 1 Sam. xi. 7, Ezr. iii. 1. The ancient stories in Judges give a different picture; a corporate national life was not attained till a later age.

from Dan even to Beer-sheba] i.e. from North to South of Israel's territory; cf. xviii. 7 *n.* and 2 Sam. iii. 10, xxiv. 2, contrast 1 Chr. xxi. 2 etc. To include Israel on the E. of Jordan, *with the land of Gilead* is added (cf. xxi. 8).

Mizpah] may be identified with the hill Nebī Samwīl, 4½ m. N.W. of Jerusalem, 2935 ft. above the sea, and about 3 m. from Tell el-Fūl (Gibeah), in the centre of the Benjamite district. A holy place occupied the summit (1 Sam. vii. 5 ff., x. 17—24), probably from very early times. See further Jer. xl. 6 ff., xli.; 1 Macc. iii. 46. While the narrative A speaks of Mizpah as the meeting-place of the Israelites (*v.* 3, xxi. 1), B refers to Beth-el (*vv.* 18, 26, xxi. 2).

2. *chiefs*] Lit. the word = *corner*, of a house Job i. 19, or of a city Neh. iii. 24, 31 f.; also a *corner-stone* Is. xxviii. 16, cf. Jer. li. 26. As suggestive of support or prominence, the *corner* could be used in a metaphorical sense; cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 38, Is. xix. 13.

even of all the tribes] *even of* is not in the Hebr.; read *and all the tribes* with LXX. cod. A.

presented themselves] **took their stand**, ready for what might happen; cf. Ex. xix. 17, Dt. xxxi. 14, 1 Sam. xvii. 16.

the assembly of the people of God] Only here; usually *the assembly of Jehovah* or *of God*, Dt. xxiii. 1—3, Neh. xiii. 1. The number 400,000 is obviously exaggerated; contrast the Song of Deborah, which reckons the warriors of all Israel at 40,000, v. 8. The treatment of history in the narrative of B reflects the ideas of the church-nation of a later day; cf. the impossible figures of P, Ex. xii. 37. Moore notes that the Roman army which destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70 numbered about 60,000; and the German army which captured Paris in 1870, about 240,000.

that drew sword] Cf. *vv.* 15, 17, 25, 35, 46, viii. 10, 2 Sam. xxiv. 9.

3 (Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of
Israel were gone up to Mizpah.) And the children of Israel
4 said, Tell us, how was this wickedness brought to pass? And
the Levite, the husband of the woman that was murdered,
answered and said, I came into Gibeah that belongeth to
5 Benjamin, I and my concubine, to lodge. And the men of
Gibeah rose against me, and beset the house round about
upon me by night; me they thought to have slain, and my
6 concubine they forced, and she is dead. And I took my
concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout
all the country of the inheritance of Israel: for they have
7 committed lewdness and folly in Israel. Behold, ye children
8 of Israel, all of you, give here your advice and counsel. And
all the people arose as one man, saying, We will not any of
us go to his tent, neither will we any of us turn unto his
9 house. But now this is the thing which we will do to

3. The first half of the verse interrupts the connexion with *v.* 1 d; it would be in place before *v.* 14. The displacement was no doubt caused by the insertion of *vv.* 2, 9—13 into the older narrative.

And the children of Israel etc.] Here follows A's report of what happened at the meeting: the evidence of the Levite is heard. In B the assembly does not ask for evidence; their righteous indignation has been roused, and they proceed to act at once, *v.* 9 ff.

5. *men of Gibeah*] **citizens** of G.; cf. ix. 2 *n.*

me they thought to have slain] See on xix. 22. Their design on the young woman would naturally involve getting rid of her husband (cf. Gen. xii. 12).

6. *all the country of the inheritance of Israel*] We hardly expect *inheritance* in plain prose; contrast xix. 29. The word may be a later insertion.

they have committed lewdness] Similarly Hos. vi. 9, Ezek. xvi. 43, xxii. 9; lit. *evil purpose*, i.e. unchastity; in this sense the word is frequent in the Law of Holiness and in Ezekiel (see Driver, *Introd.*[8], p. 49, No. 11). LXX. cod. A, Luc. omit *lewdness and*, perhaps rightly; the word may have been added to emphasize the iniquity.

7. *give...your...counsel*] The same words in 2 Sam. xvi. 20.

8. *tent*] As the parallelism shews, equivalent to house, cf. xix. 9 mg., 1 Kings viii. 66, Ps. cxxxii. 3 *tent of my house*; a survival from the time when the Israelites actually lived in tents. The resolution is expressed in poetical parallelism, cf. 1 Kings xii. 16, 2 Sam. xx. 1; we are to supply in thought 'until the crime be avenged.' The same resolution, differently expressed, follows in *vv.* 9 ff.

9. we will go up *against it by lot*] An accidental omission from the text makes it necessary to supply a verb; the LXX. reads *we will*

Gibeah; *we will go up* against it by lot; and we will take 10
ten men of an hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel,
and an hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten
thousand, to fetch victual for the people, that they may do,
when they come to [1]Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all
the folly that they have wrought in Israel. So all the men of 11
Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as one
man.

And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the [2]tribe 12
of Benjamin, saying, What wickedness is this that is come to
pass among you? Now therefore deliver up the men, the [3]sons 13
of [4]Belial, which are in Gibeah, that we may put them to

[1] Heb. *Geba.* [2] Heb. *tribes.* See Num. iv. 18, 1 Sam. ix. 21.
[3] Or, *base fellows* [4] That is, *worthlessness.*

go up. Judging from *v.* 18 and i. 1, the object of casting lots was to find out which tribe should go up first to the attack.

10. *ten men...ten thousand*] All this merely amounts to 'one man in ten'; 40,000 are to forage for the 360,000. We are reminded of the circumstantial diffuseness of P, e.g. Num. i. 2, 20, 22 etc.; see Driver, *Introd.*[8], p. 130. The style of the verse is remarkably poor; e.g. the single prep. *lamedh=to* is used nine times in a variety of senses; and the text is corrupt. The rendering *that they may do when they come* smooths over the awkwardness of the Hebr. The LXX. cod. A suggests a slight change and transposes the words, reading *for the people that come to do to G.* etc. The trouble lies in the expression *for when they come* (or *that come*); Moore and Budde would omit it as a gloss on *the people*; indeed there is no other way of obtaining a satisfactory sentence. The connexion is much improved by transposing the two halves of the *v.* and connecting with *v.* 9: *we will go up against it by lot, to do to G. of B. according to...in Israel; and we will take ten men...to fetch victual for the people* (Moore). *Geba* (see marg.) is a mistake for *Gibeah*, cf. *v.* 33.

11. *the city*] must be Gibeah.

knit together] lit. *united, associated*, emphasizing the common action. The word is used in Ezek. xxxvii. 16, 19 for the association of the tribes, and another form of it on Maccabaean coins to denote (prob.) *the community* of the Jews; *NSI.*, p. 354.

12. *the tribe of Benjamin*] So the Versions, reading the singular. The plural (see marg.) is probably due to a mistaken repetition of the plur. form of the word in the preceding sentence.

13. *deliver up the men...that we may put them to death*] Similarly 1 Sam. xi. 12.

the sons of Belial] See on xix. 22.

death, and put away evil from Israel. But [1]Benjamin would
not hearken to the voice of their brethren the children of Israel.
14 And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together
out of the cities unto Gibeah, to go out to battle against the
15 children of Israel. And the children of Benjamin were
numbered on that day out of the cities twenty and [2]six
thousand men that drew sword, besides the inhabitants of
Gibeah, which were numbered seven hundred chosen men.
16 Among all this people there were seven hundred chosen men
lefthanded; every one could sling stones at an hair-breadth,
and not miss.
17 And the men of Israel, beside Benjamin, were numbered
four hundred thousand men that drew sword: all these were
18 men of war. And the children of Israel arose, and went up

[1] Another reading is, *the children of Benjamin.*
[2] According to some ancient authorities, *five.*

put away evil] Read **the** *evil*, lit. *burn up, consume the evil*; a frequent expression in Deut., e.g. xiii. 5, xvii. 7, 12, xxii. 22.

15. The figures in this account are inconsistent. The entire muster of Benjamites is reckoned here at 26,700; while *vv.* 35, 47 give a total 25,700, and *vv.* 44—47 a total 25,600. Some MSS. of the LXX. (cod. A, Luc. etc.), followed by Vulg., read *twenty and five thousand men* here (see marg.); but this may be merely an attempt to harmonize with the numbers in *vv.* 35, 47.

seven hundred chosen men] Repeated in *v.* 16 and applied to the left-handed slingers. The words can hardly be original in both places, and the Versions agree in giving them only once. Probably they should be omitted here, and the verse ended with *the inhabitants of Gibeah*; the insertion of *were numbered* would be required when the following words were added.

16. Then, keeping the text of this *v.* as it stands, we are told that the Benjamite host included a company of 700 left-handed and exceptionally skilful warriors, just as David's army was strengthened by a similar band, 1 Chr. xii. 2. Josephus understood the narrative in this way, *Ant.* v. 2, 10. The alternative is to omit the first half of this verse, and make the 700 chosen men refer to the inhabitants of Gibeah, and *every one* (rather, *all this* army) *could sling...and not miss* refer to the entire host. But this does not seem natural, and to cut out *left-handed* as merely borrowed from iii. 15 is to remove a feature which has the appearance of originality.

18. The Israelite host is mustered (*v.* 17), and all is ready for an advance against Gibeah (*vv.* 19 f.), when the entire army marches off to Beth-el, 10 m. distance from Mizpah (if = Nebī Samwīl), to consult the divine oracle. Such a change of position at such a moment is almost

to Beth-el, and asked counsel of God; and they said, Who shall go up for us first to battle against the children of Benjamin? And the LORD said, Judah *shall go up* first.
And the children of Israel rose up in the morning, and 19
encamped against Gibeah. And the men of Israel went out 20
to battle against Benjamin; and the men of Israel set the battle in array against them at Gibeah. And the children 21
of Benjamin came forth out of Gibeah, and destroyed down to the ground of the Israelites on that day twenty and two thousand men. And the people, the men of Israel, encouraged 22
themselves, and set the battle again in array in the place where they set themselves in array the first day. (And the 23
children of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until even; and they asked of the LORD, saying, Shall I again draw nigh to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother? And the LORD said, Go up against him.)

incredible, and unnecessary, one would think, inasmuch as Mizpah itself was a sanctuary (*v.* 1). Although Beth-el has a place in the B narrative (*vv.* 26 f.), this verse can hardly belong to the original form of it. And there are indications which confirm the impression that the verse is a gloss; contrast 'asked counsel of *God*' with 'asked counsel of *Jehovah*' *vv.* 23, 27; the question and response of the oracle are imitated from i. 1, 2; in the account which follows all Israel acts together, not under the initiative of Judah; in the Hebr. *vv.* 18 and 19 begin with the same word *and they arose.*

went up to Beth-el] Vulg. *they came to the house of God, that is to Shiloh*: an interesting attempt to get over a theoretical difficulty; see on *v.* 27, and cf. xxi. 2 *n.*

20. From B; repeating the substance of *v.* 19 (from A). The words *went out...set the battle in array against them* occur in Gen. xiv. 8, a document probably not earlier than the exile.

21. The numbers here and in *v.* 25 are again prodigious: the Benjamites, without losing a man themselves (as is implied in *vv.* 35, 44—47), kill 40,000 Israelites in the two battles. Why this loss on the Israelite side? Probably the narrator considered that even the champions of the divine justice were not free from blame; they had not begun the holy war with due religious observances. Or, if *v.* 18 is *not* a later addition, because they had consulted the oracle merely to enquire which tribe should go up first.

22. To make sense this and *v.* 23 should change places. After *the men of Israel* the Vulg. adds *trusting to their prowess and numbers*, i.e. it was the presumption of the Israelites which caused their defeat.

23. *wept before the LORD*] Cf. *v.* 26, ii. 4, xxi. 2. After *went up* we should supply *to Beth-el*, as in *v.* 26.

24 And the children of Israel came near against the children
25 of Benjamin the second day. And Benjamin went forth against them out of Gibeah the second day, and destroyed down to the ground of the children of Israel again eighteen
26 thousand men; all these drew the sword. Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto Beth-el, and wept, and sat there before the LORD, and fasted that day until even; and they offered burnt offerings
27 and peace offerings before the LORD. And the children of Israel asked of the LORD, (for the ark of the covenant
28 of God was there in those days, and Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days,) saying, Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease? And the LORD said, Go up; for to-morrow I will deliver him into thine

26. *and all the people*] Either transl. **even** *all the people*, or omit as a doublet of *all the children of Israel*. Cf. *v.* 22.

offered burnt offerings and peace offerings] Similarly under circumstances of distress xxi. 4, 1 Sam. vii. 9, xiii. 9. The significance of the *burnt offering* lay in its being wholly made over to the Deity upon the altar; the special feature of the *peace* (or *safety*, or *thank*) *offering* was the sacred meal, shared by the Deity and the worshippers.

27 b, 28 a. The words in brackets give an interesting specimen of the theoretical treatment of history. To some later editor or scribe it seemed highly irregular that all Israel should offer sacrifices in any other place than the sanctuary of the ark. Accordingly the parenthesis explains that the ark in these days was at Beth-el! i.e. it must have been temporarily removed from Shiloh (Josh. xviii. 1 P, 1 Sam. iv.): and the sanctuary of the ark must have been served by the only legitimate priesthood (cf. Num. xxv. 7, xxxi. 6 P). For a similar adaptation of ancient practice to later theory cf. 2 Chr. i. 3—6 with 1 Kings iii. 4. If the present passage had come from the author of A, it would have stood earlier in the narrative, when the first enquiry of the oracle is mentioned.

the ark of the covenant of God] So 1 Sam. iv. 4, 2 Sam. xv. 24, 1 Chr. xvi. 6 (all). The phrase *ark of the covenant* is common in D and Dtc. passages, though occasionally found in J and JE.

stood before it] The usual expression is *stood before Him*, Jehovah: Dt. x. 8, xviii. 7, Eze. xliv. 15, 2 Chr. xxix. 11.

to-morrow etc.] Not until the Israelites have made their peace with God (*vv.* 23, 26) are they to be allowed to win a victory.

29. From the narrative A, which describes, not the two battles and Jehovah's direct interference (*vv.* 23, 28, 35), but the stratagem by which the Israelites captured the city; cf. Josh. viii. 4—8 JE. This *v.* continues *v.* 19.

hand. And Israel set liers in wait against Gibeah round 29
about.

And the children of Israel went up against the children of 30
Benjamin on the third day, and set themselves in array
against Gibeah, as at other times. And the children of 31
Benjamin went out against the people, and were drawn
away from the city; and they began to smite and kill of the
people, as at other times, in the high ways, of which one
goeth up to Beth-el, and the other to Gibeah, in the field,
about thirty men of Israel. And the children of Benjamin 32
said, They are smitten down before us, as at the first. But
the children of Israel said, Let us flee, and draw them away
from the city unto the high ways. And all the men of 33

liers in wait] Plural, while *vv.* 33, 36, 37, 38 use the sing. collect., *the ambush*. The plural may refer to the various parties posted *round about* the city.

30. *on the third day*] The account of the battle becomes exceedingly confused. It seems to be rounded off at *v.* 35 in the usual way, with a statement of the result and numbers slain; but in *vv.* 36 ff. we find the battle still in progress, and we go through the various incidents again. This repetition is due partly to the combination of the narratives A and B, and partly, it would seem, to the insertion of editorial expansions or glosses. In the main *vv.* 30—36 a come from the later source B; and in the main 36 b—47 may be assigned to the earlier source A. Details which appear to lie outside these two versions, or merely repeat phrases from them, may be regarded, provisionally, as later additions; see on *vv.* 31, 37 b, 43, 44 b—46.

31. The opening sentence follows the pattern of *vv.* 21, 25. The remainder of the *v.* raises difficulties; it is partly repeated in *v.* 39; the pretence of flight does not come properly till *v.* 32. Either we may regard as additional glosses *they were drawn away from the city* (there is no *and* in the Hebr.), and the topographical note *in the high ways, of which...to Gibeah*, leaving the statement that the Benjamites began to smite and kill in the open country as on the former occasions (so Moore): or we may retain the words just quoted, and slightly rearrange them on the model of *vv.* 32 and 39: *they were drawn away from the city into the highways, of which...to Gibeah, and they began to smite and kill in the field about thirty men of Israel* (so Budde, Nowack, who distinguish *three*, instead of two versions). The first alternative has the merit of simplicity.

to Gibeah] cannot be right, for the Israelites were retreating towards the N., *away from* Gibeah; the general direction of the two roads must be the same. For *Gibeah*, therefore, read *Gibeon*; at a short distance beyond Tell el-Fūl the road branches northwards to *Beitīn* (= Beth-el) and N.W. to el-Jib (= Gibeon), 3 m. N.W. of Tell el-Fūl.

Israel rose up out of their place, and set themselves in array at Baal-tamar: and the liers in wait of Israel brake forth out
34 of their place, even out of [1]Maareh-geba. And there came over against Gibeah ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and the battle was sore: but they knew not that evil

[1] Or, *the meadow of Geba* (or *Gibeah* See ver. 10)

33. *rose up...set themselves in array*] The Israelites had taken up their position opposite Gibeah and then retired northwards (*vv.* 30—32); now, apparently, after the feigned retreat they take up a second position at a further distance from Gibeah. But this is hardly the natural meaning of the words; *rose up* implies a new action (e.g. *v.* 19) rather than the repetition of a movement which had already begun. It is in fact difficult to fit *v.* 33 a into the context. May it then come from the A narrative, and form the sequel of *v.* 29? This would give us an allusion to the battle, which otherwise is missing from A: after the ambush was set round Gibeah (*v.* 29), the main army of Israel took up its position in Baal-tamar (*v.* 33 a). But the language of the verse does not inspire confidence in its originality (lit. *the men of Israel rose up from his place*!); on the other hand the mention of Baal-tamar may well be ancient. Perhaps we may describe this half-verse as an early addition. See further below.

Baal-tamar] Site unknown, but not far from Gibeah; Eusebius (*OS.* 238, 75) declares that the name was surviving in the locality as Beth-tamar. Baal-tamar = *B. of the palm-tree*, a rare instance of the god Baal being associated with a tree; cf. Jer. ii. 27[1]. The palm was a symbol of Ashtoreth rather than of Baal.

brake forth] Elsewhere of the sea or a river, Job xxxviii. 8, xl. 23, Ezek. xxxii. 2; from the same root comes the name of the fountain at Jerusalem, Gihon *the gusher*. So here, of the liers in wait *bursting forth* from ambush; as applied in this way to warfare the word is used in Aramaic. Cf. the parallel account from A in *v.* 37.

Maareh-geba] Supposed to mean *the bare* or *open space of G.*, but probably a mistake for *maarâb l^e geba*, i.e. *west of Geba*, LXX. cod. A and MSS., Vulg.; a late usage, 2 Chr. xxxii. 30, xxxiii. 14. Geba is either a mistake for Gibeah (as in *v.* 10), or more probably = Jeba', N.E. of Gibeah.

34. *ten thousand chosen men*] Apparently the men who had formed the ambush: they now moved from their place of concealment, and posted themselves between the city and the Benjamites, who were chasing the men of Israel, so as to cut off the possibility of retreat.

evil was close upon them] lit. *was about to touch them*; cf. *v.* 41 *evil had touched them*. Cf. Josh. viii. 14. The recurrence of the words in *v.* 41 has led to the suggestion (made by Torrey) that *vv.* 35, 36 a once

[1] See Baudissin, *Adonis u. Esmun* (1911), p. 176. Winckler interprets differently, *Baal is Tamar*, i.e. Ishtar-Ashtoreth, the local deity possessing the attributes of god and goddess; *Gesch. Israels* ii. 98 ff.

was [1]close upon them. And the LORD smote Benjamin 35
before Israel: and the children of Israel destroyed of
Benjamin that day twenty and five thousand and an hundred
men: all these drew the sword.

So the children of Benjamin saw that they were smitten: for 36
the men of Israel gave place to Benjamin, because they
trusted unto the liers in wait which they had set against
Gibeah. And the liers in wait hasted, and rushed upon 37
Gibeah; and the liers in wait drew themselves along, and
smote all the city with the edge of the sword. Now the 38
appointed sign between the men of Israel and the liers in

[1] Heb. *touching.*

stood after *v.* 41, and that a scribe, glancing from the similar endings of *vv.* 41 and 34, accidentally transposed *vv.* 35, 36 a to their present position, where they destroy the natural order of events. The composition of this chapter is so entangled that we may readily assume a disturbance of the text here as in other places (e.g. *vv.* 22 f.).

An alternative reconstruction is proposed by Budde, who assigns the passage to A: 'And Israel set liers in wait against Gibeah round about (*v.* 29), while all the men of Israel rose up out of their place, and set themselves in array at Baal-tamar (*v.* 33 a). And there came over against Gibeah 10,000 chosen men out of all Israel, and the battle was sore (*v.* 34 a). Thereupon the liers in wait of Israel brake forth out of their place west of Geba (*v.* 33 b); but they knew not that evil was close upon them' (*v.* 34 b); then follow *vv.* 36 b—38. This gives a fairly lucid order; but it is based upon a rather different treatment of the chapter from that which is being followed.

35. As elsewhere the account of the battle is brought to an end with a summing up of the numbers slain, *vv.* 21, 25, 46, iii. 29, Josh. viii. 25. For the numbers see on *v.* 15. This later source B, it is to be noted, ascribes the victory to the direct interference of Jehovah; cf. 2 Chron. xiii. 15, xiv. 12, where the same verb *smote* occurs.

36. *the children of Benjamin*] must refer to the 600 survivors. This half verse introduces the account of the flight, which is continued by *v.* 42.

Clause b may be regarded as a continuation of *v.* 29 in the narrative of A; the description of the feint is parallel to that in *v.* 32 b.

37. *hasted and rushed*] as did the ambush at Ai, Josh. viii. 19; but the words are different. See ix. 33 *n.*

drew themselves along] Cf. iv. 6. But the massacre of the inhabitants anticipates the signal; the destruction of the city does not begin till the smoke is seen to rise. This half of the verse appears to be a gloss on cl. a, added by some reader who wanted to make *rushed upon Gibeah* more explicit.

wait was, that they should make a great cloud of smoke rise
39 up out of the city. [1]And the men of Israel turned in the
battle, and Benjamin began to smite and kill of the men of
Israel about thirty persons: for they said, Surely they are
40 smitten down before us, as in the first battle. But when the
cloud began to arise up out of the city in a pillar of smoke,
the Benjamites looked behind them, and, behold, the whole
41 of the city went up *in smoke* to heaven. And the men of
Israel turned, and the men of Benjamin were amazed: for
42 they saw that evil was come upon them. Therefore they
turned their backs before the men of Israel unto the way of
the wilderness; but the battle followed hard after them; and
[2]they which came out of the cities destroyed them in the

[1] Or, *And the men...battle: (now Benjamin...heaven:) and the men &c.*
[2] Or, *them which came...they destroyed*

38. *a great cloud of smoke*] Omit *great* (*hereb*, an ungrammatical form) with LXX. cod. A and MSS., Syr., Vulg., as an incorrect repetition of the preceding word (*'ōrēb*).

39. *And the men of Israel turned*] The turn, however, does not come properly till *v.* 41. Read with a slight change *and that the men of I. should turn*, as part of the appointed sign; *v.* 38 will then end with *in the battle*. The marg. may thus be disregarded.

and Benjamin etc.] A parallel version of *vv.* 31, 32.

40. *looked behind them*] Cf. Josh. viii. 20. It almost seems as if the account of the capture of Ai by a similar stratagem had influenced the present narrative.

the whole of the city] Cf. Deut. xiii. 16 'and thou shalt burn the city with fire as a *whole offering* unto Jehovah thy God'; but perhaps the word is hardly intended to bear its technical sense of *holocaust* here.

41. *amazed*] An archaism in English, for *bewildered*; cf. St Mk. x. 32, 1 Pet. iii. 6 (AV., contrast RV.).

42. *unto the way of the wilderness*] **in the direction of** the barren hilly region, E. of Gibeah, which descends from the Central Highlands to the Jordan valley.

out of the cities] i.e. the Benjamite cities on the line of the flight. But all the male Benjamites had been out with the army, and most of them killed: so read *out of the city*, i.e. Gibeah; the reference will then be to the men who formed the ambush. For *in the midst thereof* (lit. *of him*) read *in the midst*, as Josh. viii. 22. The Benjamites suddenly found themselves caught between Israelites in front and rear. The men of Ai were intercepted in the same way.

The verse comes from the B narrative: cf. *vv.* 21, 25 *destroyed them*. With the correction of the text the marg. becomes unnecessary.

midst thereof. They inclosed the Benjamites round about, *and* 43
chased them, *and* [1]trode them down [2]at *their* resting place,
as far as over against Gibeah toward the sunrising. And 44
there fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men; all these
were men of valour. And they turned and fled toward the 45
wilderness unto the rock of Rimmon: and they gleaned of
them in the high ways five thousand men; and followed
hard after them unto Gidom, and smote of them two thou-
sand men. So that all which fell that day of Benjamin 46
were twenty and five thousand men that drew the sword;
all these *were* men of valour. But six hundred men turned 47
and fled toward the wilderness unto the rock of Rimmon,

[1] Or, *overtook them* [2] Or, *at Menuhah*

43. The unidiomatic style (*and...and* are not in the original), together with the obscurity of the sense, prove that the text is corrupt. Of the various attempts to emend it, the following is as plausible as any: taking the two Hebr. words for *the Benjamites...chased them* as a doublet of the next two *at their resting place, trode them down*, and omitting the latter, we may read *they cut down* (LXX. cod. B) *Benjamin and pursued him as far as over against Geba toward the sunrising.* The *Gibeah* of the text was not E. of the flying Benjamites; as elsewhere it is confused with *Geba* = Jeba', 3 m. N.E. of Tell el-Fūl. Jeba' lies on the way to Rammōn; but before the fugitives could reach their place of refuge (Rimmon *v.* 45), the narrow defile of the Wadi Suwēnīt (1 Sam. xiv. 4 ff.), between Jeba' and Machmās, would stop further pursuit: accordingly *over against Geba* they were *cut down.*

44. *eighteen thousand men*] Contrast the number in *v.* 35 from B. The first half of the *v.* may be assigned to A, and connects with *v.* 47; the second half has found its way here from *v.* 46, probably by a copyist's error.

45. *the rock of Rimmon*] now Rammōn, rises from the plateau due E. of Beth-el, visible from all sides; it lies rather more than 8 m. N.E. of Tell el-Fūl.

gleaned of them] For the figure cf. viii. 2.

unto Gidom] Site unknown; the Versions therefore guess, LXX. cod. A *Gilead*, Syr. *Gibeon*. With the change of a vowel, we may read *until they cut them off* (*gid'ām*), the word used in xxi. 6.

46. For the total here cf. on *v.* 35. This and the preceding verse appear to be, not fragments from the B narrative, but editorial additions: the first part of *v.* 45 is borrowed from *v.* 47, the figures in *v.* 46 are obtained by adding up those in *vv.* 44 (from A) and 45; contrast B's total in *v.* 35.

47. A's version of the final flight. The 600 survivors have a part to play in the sequel.

48 and abode in the rock of Rimmon four months. And the men of Israel turned again upon the children of Benjamin, and smote them with the edge of the sword, both [1]the entire city, and the cattle, and all that they found: moreover all the cities which they found they set on fire.

21 Now the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpah, saying, There shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin
2 to wife. And the people came to Beth-el, and sat there till even before God, and lifted up their voices, and wept sore.

[1] Or, as otherwise read, *the inhabited city* See Deut. ii. 34.

48. This *v.* (from B) records the destruction of the Benjamites who had not taken part in the conflict.

the entire city] The marg. is to be preferred, lit. *the city of men*, a phrase only found again in Deut. ii. 34, iii. 6, and there, as here, in connexion with devoting a city or people to destruction. The Israelites were determined to make the tribe of Benjamin a *hérem*: cf. xxi. 10, 11, i. 17 *n.*

Ch. **xxi.** *How the Benjamites were saved from extinction.*

The Israelites had bound themselves by oath not to intermarry with the men of Benjamin; but the tribe had been nearly annihilated in the conflict, and unless wives could be found for the survivors it would become extinct. How was such a disaster to be prevented without a violation of the oath? We have a double version of the way in which the problem was solved. According to one account, an excuse was found for a holy war against Jabesh-gilead, and 400 virgins were saved in the destruction of the city (*vv.* 2—14, 16 a, 24, 25 from the B narrative); according to the other, the Benjamite survivors, acting on a plan recommended by the Israelites, captured wives for themselves from the daughters of Shiloh who came to dance at the yearly festival (*vv.* 1, 15—23, in the main, from A). Editorial attempts to harmonize the two narratives may be detected in *vv.* 14, 16, 22.

1. *had sworn in Mizpah*] Probably, like Jephthah's vow (xi. 30 *n.*), a religious oath made at the sanctuary (xx. 1). This solemn oath, which could neither be broken nor withdrawn, is an essential feature of both narratives (*vv.* 18, 22 A; 7 B); it created the problem for which some solution had to be found.

2. *came to Beth-el*] The characteristics of the B narrative reappear in this chapter: the resort to Beth-el *till even* cf. xx. 18, 26; the weeping, intensified each time, cf. xx. 23, 26; the offering of sacrifices *v.* 4 cf. xx. 26; the post-exilic *congregation* (*vv.* 10, 13, 16), and the *assembly* (*vv.* 5, 8) cf. xx. 1 *n.*; the artificial numbers *v.* 10.

The Vulg. renders 'Veneruntque omnes ad domum Dei, in Silo,' following the theory noticed in xx. 18 *n.*

And they said, O LORD, the God of Israel, why is this come 3
to pass in Israel, that there should be to-day one tribe lacking
in Israel? And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people 4
rose early, and built there an altar, and offered burnt offerings
and peace offerings. And the children of Israel said, Who 5
is there among all the tribes of Israel that came not up in
the assembly unto the LORD? For they had made a great
oath concerning him that came not up unto the LORD to
Mizpah, saying, He shall surely be put to death. And 6
the children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their
brother, and said, There is one tribe cut off from Israel this
day. How shall we do for wives for them that remain, 7
seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give
them of our daughters to wives? And they said, What one 8
is there of the tribes of Israel that came not up unto
the LORD to Mizpah? And, behold, there came none

3. *one tribe lacking*] of the sacred number twelve. Contrast the expression of the similar sentiment in the older narrative, *v.* 15.

4. *built there an altar*] But an altar must have existed in the sanctuary at Beth-el when the sacrifices were offered before, xx. 26. Either these words, or the whole verse, must be a gloss, due perhaps to a recollection of 2 Sam. xxiv. 25 and *ch.* xx. 26.

5. The first half of the *v.* anticipates *v.* 8; while the second half is awkwardly expressed (lit. 'the great oath was in respect of him that came not up' etc.). Like the previous *v.*, this can only be regarded as a later addition; together they interrupt the natural connexion between *vv.* 3 and 6. *to Mizpah* was no doubt intended to harmonize with *v.* 1; the people are at Beth-el according to *vv.* 2, 3.

6. *cut off*] *cut* **down**; the figure is that of *hewing down* trees, cf. Is. x. 33, xiv. 12.

7. *wives for them that remain*] Cf. the parallel version in *v.* 16.

8. *Jabesh-gilead*] This ancient city, Jabesh of G., is only mentioned again in connexion with the history of Saul, 1 Sam. xi. 1 ff., xxxi. 11 ff., 2 Sam. ii. 5 f., xxi. 12 f. The name survives in the Wādi el-Jābis, about half way between the Yarmuk and the W. Zerḳā (Jabbok); the city probably lay in the upper part of the valley where it reaches the highlands of Gilead, a night's march from Beth-shean (=Bēsān) across the Jordan, 1 Sam. xxxi. 12. It has been suggested that this narrative of the war against Jabesh was dictated by Judaean animosity against Saul[1]; but it is clear that the narrative dates from a period later than that of the kingdom of Judah. At the same time we cannot deny that the writer, in singling out Jabesh for punishment, may have remembered its ancient loyalty to Saul (so Moore).

[1] So recently, Kittel, *Gesch. des Volkes Israel*[2] (1909), p. 23.

9 to the camp from Jabesh-gilead to the assembly. For when
the people were numbered, behold, there were none of
10 the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead there. And the congrega-
tion sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and
commanded them, saying, Go and smite the inhabitants of
Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women
11 and the little ones. And this is the thing that ye shall do;
ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that
12 hath lien by man. And they found among the inhabitants
of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins, that had not
known man by lying with him: and they brought them unto
the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.
13 And the whole congregation sent and spake to the children
of Benjamin that were in the rock of Rimmon, and proclaimed
14 peace unto them. And Benjamin returned at that time;
and they gave them the women which they had saved alive
of the women of Jabesh-gilead: and yet so they sufficed them

9. *were numbered*] Cf. xx. 15, 17.

10. *twelve thousand men*] No doubt reckoning 1000 men from each tribe, cf. Num. xxxi. 4 f.; the writer forgot that Benjamin could not be counted.

11. *And this is the thing...do*] Similarly xx. 9.

ye shall utterly destroy] The city and all its inhabitants were to become *hérem*, placed under the ban, for not taking part in the holy war against Benjamin; cf. xx. 48 *n*. This episode is based upon Num. xxxi. 7, 17 f. (a late stratum of P). The writer again betrays his forgetfulness: he fails to copy his model in the important particular *ye shall keep alive the virgins for yourselves* Num. xxxi. 18. The words are accordingly supplied by LXX. cod. B and MSS.

12. *unto the camp*] From the foregoing one would naturally conclude that the main body of the Israelites was at Beth-el.

to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan] What can be the point of this remark? 'which is in the land of Canaan,' by way of contrast to the Israelite territory E. of the Jordan, is intelligible in Josh. xxii. 9 but not so suitable here. The sentence can hardly have stood originally in B; it looks like an editorial addition designed to prepare the way for A's narrative: all Israel must be brought upon the scene of *v.* 23. Probably the words were borrowed from Josh. xxi. 2, xxii. 9, cf. xviii. 9; behind them lies the tradition that Shiloh was the meeting-place and sanctuary of the tabernacle for all Israel after the conquest under Joshua; Josh. xviii. 1 P.

13. *in the rock of Rimmon*] Cf. xx. 45.

14. *and yet so they sufficed them not*] i.e. the 400 virgins were not sufficient for the 600 Benjamite survivors; a prosaic attempt to harmonize

not. And the people repented them for Benjamin, because 15
that the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we 16
do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are
destroyed out of Benjamin? And they said, There must be 17
an inheritance for them that are escaped of Benjamin, that
a tribe be not blotted out from Israel. Howbeit we may 18
not give them wives of our daughters: for the children of
Israel had sworn, saying, Cursed be he that giveth a wife to
Benjamin. And they said, Behold, there is [1]a feast of the 19

[1] Or, *the feast*

with the old story in *vv.* 15—23, as though the rape at Shiloh were a supplementary device to bring the number of wives up to the total required; cf. *v.* 16 a. Lit. the phrase may be rendered *and they* (the Israelites) *did not find* enough *for them* even *so*, cf. Num. xi. 22; as a rule *enough* is expressed in the Heb., Lev. xii. 8, xxv. 26, 28

15. From the A narrative; sequel of *v.* 1.

had made a breach] Cf. 2 Sam. vi. 8, v. 20 and Ex. xix. 22, 24 J. In early civilization it was felt to be a grave disaster if a family died out (hence the custom of the levirate marriage, Gen. xxxviii. 8, Deut. xxv. 5 ff.), still more if a clan or tribe were allowed to become extinct. This primitive feeling no doubt sprung from a dread lest the religious rites which concerned the departed members of the family, or kept intact the tribal bonds, should cease to be rendered.

16. *the elders of the congregation*] See on xx. 1, and cf. Lev. iv. 15. That this half of the verse does not belong to the old story is further shewn by the reference to wives for the Benjamites who had not secured any of the 400 virgins from Jabesh; like the last words of *v.* 14, 16 a is a harmonizing addition. 16 b may well continue *v.* 15 and belong to A.

17. *There must be an inheritance...of Benjamin*] The Hebr. has only *An inheritance of the escaped for* (or *of*) *Benjamin*, which yields no sense, and suggests corruption in the text. The problem is, how to prevent Benjamin from becoming extinct; if the survivors are not to die with no descendants to hand on their race and restore the fortunes of the tribe, wives must be found for them; but since the Israelites have sworn not to give them wives, some way out of the difficulty must be devised. With an inconsiderable change in the Hebr., giving the sentence an interrogative force, it is possible to obtain a meaning which suits the context: *How shall a remnant be left over for Benjamin, and a tribe not be blotted out from Israel,* (*v.* 18) *seeing we cannot give them wives of our daughters?* The correction is supported by some MSS. of the LXX.; *a remnant* here means a number sufficient to carry on the succession; *we*, i.e. the Israelites, is emphatic.

19. *there is a feast*] **the** *feast* (marg.). The word rendered *feast*

LORD from year to year in Shiloh, which is on the north of
Beth-el, on the east side of the high way that goeth up from
20 Beth-el to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah. And
they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and
21 lie in wait in the vineyards; and see, and, behold, if the
daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in the dances, then
come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his
wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of
22 Benjamin. And it shall be, when their fathers or their
brethren come to [1]complain unto us, that we will say unto
them, Grant them [2]graciously unto us: because we took not

[1] Or, *strive with us* [2] Or, *as a gift*

(*ḥag*) strictly implies a pilgrimage to a sanctuary; the three chief *ḥaggîm* were festivals at which every male Israelite was required to appear before Jehovah (Ex. xxiii. 14—17); cf. also the Mohammedan *ḥaj* = the pilgrimage to Mecca. What the particular feast here was we are not told; most probably it was a vintage festival to celebrate the ingathering; for this was an occasion of special rejoicing, cf. the Canaanite feast at Shechem ix. 27, and marked the end of the year (September); note that the vines were still in leaf, *v.* 20.

of the LORD...in Shiloh] Shiloh was a centre of Jehovah-worship at this early period, xviii. 31. A topographical gloss (cf. *v.* 12, xx. 31) defines the situation in such a way as to leave no doubt that Shiloh is to be identified with the modern *Seilûn*, some 2 miles E.S.E. of *Lubbân* = Lebonah; in later times, after the exile, it was probably necessary to tell readers where the ancient sites were. Obviously this addition cannot come from the author of *v.* 12, where Shiloh is first mentioned. 19a may be taken as addressed to the Benjamites: 20b gives the rest of the speech.

21. *to dance in the dances*] For the religious dance on occasions of joy cf. Ex. xxxii. 19, 2 Sam. vi. 14, Ps. cxlix. 3, cl. 4.

catch you every man his wife] A legend of early Rome tells how Romulus demanded wives from the neighbouring cities for the men whom he had collected. When this was refused, he announced a festival of the god Consus at the foot of the hill he occupied. Sabines and Latins crowded to the spot with their wives and daughters, when the Roman youth rushed upon them and carried off the women to their stronghold: Livy i. 9.

22. The verse is difficult to understand owing to corruptions in the text.

to complain unto us] Follow marg., and read *to* **strive** *with* **you** (so LXX., Vulg.); the angry parents would naturally go to the captors with their grievance, rather than to the Israelites. When that happens, say the Israelites, we will put in a plea for you.

Grant them graciously unto us etc.] To make sense the text may be

for each man *of them* his wife in battle: neither did ye give them unto them; else would ye now be guilty. And the 23
children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they carried off: and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and built the cities, and dwelt in them. And the children of 24
Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe and to his family, and they went out from thence every man to his inheritance. In those days there was no king in Israel: 25
every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

emended as follows: *Be gracious to them, because they received not each his wife in the war; for if ye* (emphatic) *had given them unto them, ye would surely now be guilty* (of violating your oath). The correction *they* (for *we*) *received not* is supported by some MSS. of the LXX. The war will be that against Jabesh-gilead; but since the verse as a whole seems to belong to the older narrative, which knows nothing of the expedition against Jabesh, the sentence *because they received not each his wife in the war* must be regarded as a harmonizing attempt to work in the narrative of B with that of A (cf. *vv.* 14 b, 16 a).

Some scholars emend the text differently, reading *Be gracious to them because they took each his wife in the war*; the omission of the negative is found in some MSS. of the LXX., but the evidence is not weighty enough for treating this as the true text of the LXX.; moreover *the war* is too strong a term to apply to the rape of the Shilonites.

23. *took them wives...carried off*] Render **carried off** *wives*...**seized.** The expression *to take wives* in the sense of *marry* is found only in late writings; the reference here, however, is not to marriage, but to capture. This verse closes the narrative of A.

24. *departed*] **went their ways**, as the form of the verb implies, going in this direction and that, cf. Gen. xiii. 17, Josh. xviii. 4. The first *from thence* may mean from Shiloh, the second, from the tribal territory to each man's private property. Otherwise the two halves of the verse are doublets and come from different sources.

25. *there was no king in Israel*] Cf. xvii. 6 *n.* A suitable transition to the history of Samuel which relates the beginning of the monarchy.

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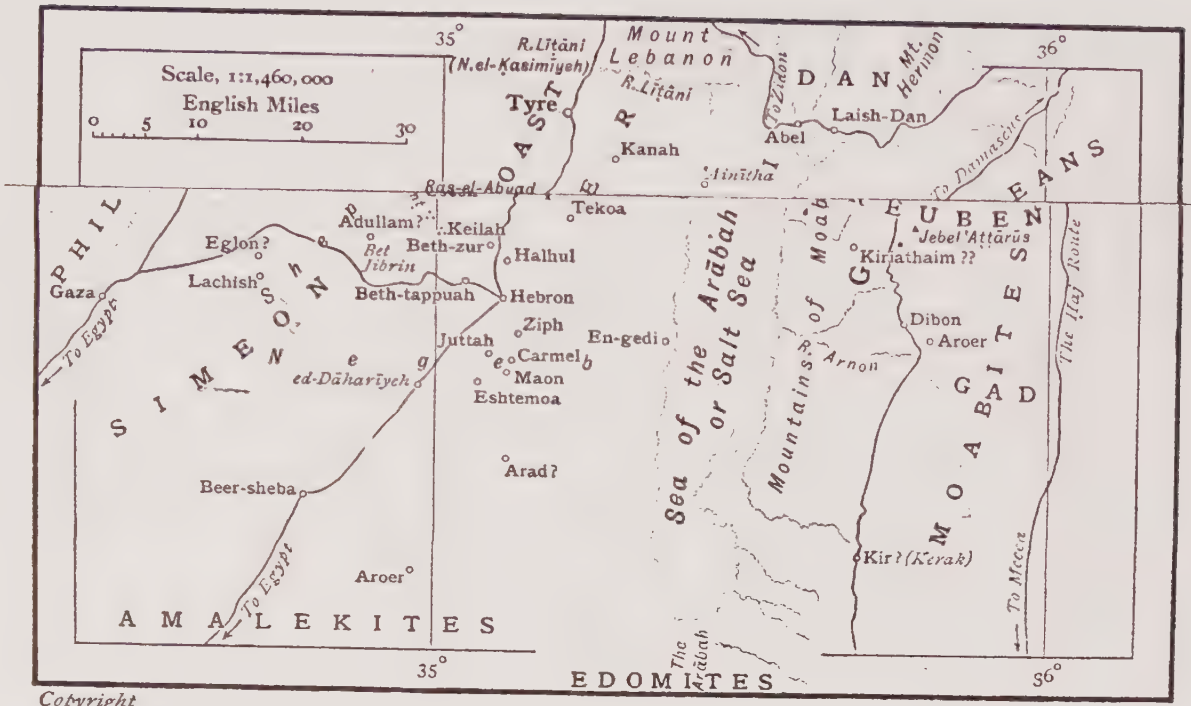
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A. F. KIRKPATRICK, D.D.
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THE BOOK OF RUTH

in the Revised Version

with introduction and notes

by

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PREFACE

BY THE

GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE present General Editor for the Old Testament in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges desires to say that, in accordance with the policy of his predecessor the Bishop of Worcester, he does not hold himself responsible for the particular interpretations adopted or for the opinions expressed by the editors of the several Books, nor has he endeavoured to bring them into agreement with one another. It is inevitable that there should be differences of opinion in regard to many questions of criticism and interpretation, and it seems best that these differences should find free expression in different volumes. He has endeavoured to secure, as far as possible, that the general scope and character of the series should be observed, and that views which have a reasonable claim to consideration should not be ignored, but he has felt it best that the final responsibility should, in general, rest with the individual contributors.

A. F. KIRKPATRICK.

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LIST OF PRINCIPAL ABBREVIATIONS

Ber. Rab.	The Midrash Rabbah, *Bereshith* (Genesis).
Bertheau	E. Bertheau, *Das Buch der Richter und Ruth*, 2nd edn., 1883.
Budde	K. Budde, *Das Buch der Richter*, 1897, in Marti's Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament.
Buhl	F. Buhl, *Geographie des Alten Palästina*, 1896.
CIS.	*Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum.*
COT.[2]	E. Schrader, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament*, 2nd edn., 1885.
D	Deuteronomy (7th cent. B.C.) and Deuteronomist.
Driver, *Introd.*[8]	S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, 8th edn., 1909.
Driver, *Schweich Lectures.*	S. R. Driver, *Modern Research as illustrating the Bible*, 1909. The Schweich Lectures for 1908.
E	Elohist, Hexateuchal source, written probably in the Northern Kingdom, 9th—8th cent. B.C.
Encycl. Bibl.	*Encyclopaedia Biblica*, edited by T. K. Cheyne and J. Sutherland Black, 4 vols., 1899—1903.
EV.	English Version or Versions (AV. and RV.).
HDB. or *DB.*	Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, 5 vols., 1898—1904.
J	Jehovist, Hexateuchal source, written probably in Judah, 9th cent. B.C.
KAT.[3]	*Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*, 3rd edn., 1903, by H. Zimmern and H. Winckler.
KB.	E. Schrader, *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek* (transliterations and translations of Babylonian and Assyrian texts, by various scholars), 6 vols., 1889—1900.

Kimhi	The commentary of David Ḳimḥi of Narbonne (A.D. 1160—1235), printed in Rabbinic Bibles.
Lagrange	M.-J. Lagrange, *Le Livre des Juges*, 1903.
LXX.	The Septuagint in Swete's edition, *The Old Testament in Greek*, vol. i., 1887. (3rd edn., 1901.)
LXX. cod. B LXX. MSS. LXX. cod. A	Two Greek versions of Judges exist; the one represented by codex B (Vaticanus) and a considerable group of cursives designated N by Moore; the other represented by codex A (Alexandrinus) and the majority of MSS. both uncial and cursive. Codex B is printed as the text of Swete's edition, with the readings of codex A below; the latter has been edited separately by Brooke and McLean, 1897.
LXX. Luc.	Among the cursive MSS. which belong to the version represented by codex A is a group which furnishes the text published by Lagarde, *Librorum Veteris Testamenti Canonicorum pars prior*, 1883, and is thought to give the recension of Lucian. Another
LXX. MSS.	set of cursives, belonging also to the version of codex A, forms a second group, designated M by Moore.
Moore	George F. Moore, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Judges*, in the International Critical Commentary series, 1895. Also *Judges* in the Polychrome Bible, English translation and notes, 1898; Hebrew Text and critical notes, 1900.
Nowack	W. Nowack, *Richter und Ruth*, 1900, in Nowack's Handkommentar zum Alten Testament.
NSI.	G. A. Cooke, *A Text-book of North-Semitic Inscriptions*, 1903.
Onom. or *OS.*	Paul de Lagarde, *Onomastica Sacra*, 1870; written in Greek by Eusebius, and translated into Latin by Jerome. This edition is cited by pages and lines.
OTJC.[2]	W. Robertson Smith, *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, 2nd edn., 1892.
Pesh. or Syr.	Peshiṭṭo, the Syriac Version of the Bible.

Rashi	The commentary of R(abbi) Sh(ĕlōmoh) Y(iṣḥāḳi) of Troyes, A.D. 1040—1105, printed in Rabbinic Bibles.
RD	The Deuteronomic Redactor.
RVm	The Revised Version marginal notes.
Syro-Hex.	The Syriac version, ascribed to Paul of Tella, of the Septuagint column in Origen's Hexapla, representing the Hexaplaric LXX. as it was read at Alexandria in the beginning of the 7th cent. A.D.
Vulg.	Vulgate, Jerome's Latin Version of the Bible.
ZDPV.	*Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palaestina-Vereins.*

A small 'superior' figure attached to the title of a book (e.g. *Introd.*[8]) indicates the *edition* of the work referred to.

In citations, e.g. Jud. ii. 1 b, 5 a, the letters a, b (sometimes c, d) denote respectively the first and second (or third and fourth) parts of the verse cited.

The citations always refer to the English Version; occasionally, where the Hebrew numbering differs from the English, attention is called to the fact.

In the transliteration of Hebrew and Arabic words or proper names the following equivalents are used: ʾ = א; ʿ = ע; *gh* = غ; ḥ = ח, ح; *kh* (in Arabic words) = خ; *dh* = ذ; ḳ = ק, ق; ṣ = צ, ص; t = ט, ط.

Bertholet's commentary, *Das Buch Ruth* (1898) in Marti's Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament, is referred to by the name of the author.

A German translation of the *Midrash Ruth Rabbah* has been published by A. Wünsche (Leipzig, 1883).

INTRODUCTION

§ 1. Contents and aim of the Book

THE ancient narratives of the Book of Judges carry us back to a half-barbarous age of struggle and disorder, memorable chiefly for the deeds of Israel's heroes: the Book of Ruth, although the scene is laid in the same age, gives us a very different picture. It introduces us to the peaceful life of the home and of the village, with its sorrows and joys, its wholesome industry and kindly virtues; a life which is by no means barren of heroic qualities, but they take the form of unselfish affection and generosity and loyalty to the ties of kindred; a simple community, tenacious of long established customs, and penetrated throughout by a spirit of unaffected piety. No doubt the picture is idealized; but the author, so far from inventing facts which never existed, is evidently describing a life with which he was familiar. How true to nature are his incidental touches! the excitement of the women-folk over Naomi's return and their interest in the birth of the child, the grave approval of the elders sitting in the gate, the cautious prudence of the 'near kinsman.'

Other parts of the Old Testament create a far less favourable impression of the religion of the people; their superstitions and crude beliefs, even their wilful unfaithfulness which stirred the indignation of the prophets, confront us again and again. But in the later literature, especially in the Wisdom Books and in some of the Psalms, we find plenty of evidence to shew that there must have been many homes in Israel beside those of Naomi and Boaz which were hallowed by the fear of God and love of family, many a village beside Beth-lehem in which an

act of disinterested charity would win approval 'in the gate.' For such companion-pictures to Ruth we can point to Job i. 1—5, xxix., Ps. cxxvii., cxxviii., cxxxiii., Prov. xxxi. 10—31, Tobit ii., Judith viii. 1—8, Ecclus. xl. 18—27. The religious homes of which we catch a glimpse at the beginning of the New Testament, homes like those of Elisabeth and Zechariah and of the Holy Family, could trace an ancestry of many generations in ordinary Jewish life.

But the aim of our author was not merely to give an idyllic description of a God-fearing, pastoral community. This forms only the background from which his principal persons stand out: it is their characters, and the events of their lives, which make up the substance of his story. The sorrows of Naomi, which have not deprived her of that rarest of gifts, "a heart at leisure from itself To soothe and sympathize"; the devotion of Ruth, which leads her to forget her own people and her father's house, and fulfil her duty by the family of her dead husband; the generosity of Boaz, shewn by his compassion for the young widow, and then by taking upon himself the redemption of Naomi's property, and, crowning act of all, by his marrying Ruth as part of the kinsman's obligation: these are the author's chief concern, and his way of handling them gives its charm and value to the Book. At the same time the story afforded him an opportunity to bring out certain further points. One was the fact that a Moabite woman, the daughter of an alien race and faith, could be a pattern of the highest virtues, and faithful to the customs of her adopted country (ii. 11, iii. 9 f.). Another was the commendable piety of a next of kin marriage with a childless widow (ch. iv.); not necessarily a levirate marriage (Deut. xxv. 5 ff.), for Boaz was not the *levir* or brother in law of Ruth's dead husband, but a marriage analogous to it in principle and object. Finally, the author intended to shew how by this particular marriage Ruth became the great grandmother of David (iv. 17), a matter of special interest to all Jewish readers.

From what has been said about its contents, it will be manifest that the Book of Ruth cannot be described as history in the sense in which the early narratives of Judges, Samuel, and Kings

are history; in the Hebrew Bible it is not classed among the historical books, and it was written long after the time with which it professes to deal. Yet we may feel certain that the story is based upon historical truth; the scene and the characters which fill it are unmistakeably true to life; the author drew upon facts of experience, and at the same time, we may well believe, made use of certain family traditions relating to David[1]. Out of these he wove his tale, which he intended to be "an example to his own age as well as an interesting sketch of the past" (Robertson Smith and Cheyne, *Encycl. Bibl.*, col. 4172).

This, however, is not the view of the author's purpose which is taken by many modern scholars[2]. Ruth is supposed to have been written as a protest against the rigorous measures adopted by Ezra and Nehemiah when they discovered the danger of mixed marriages (Ezr. ix., x., Neh. x. 30, xiii. 23—27). It is true, of course, that the author represents a Moabite woman as a pattern of all that an Israelite wife should be, and tells how she was admitted to a place of honour in an illustrious Hebrew family; but it argues a singular lack of imagination and literary insight to treat the Book of Ruth as a counter-blast or manifesto. "Surely no one who thoroughly appreciates the charm of this book will be satisfied with the prevalent theory of its object. There is no 'tendency' about the book; it represents in no degree a party programme" (*Encycl. Bibl.*, l.c.). Had the author written with any such intention, why did he disguise it so artfully? We may question whether Jewish readers in the time of Nehemiah would have detected a protest against his policy any more readily than we do in such a guileless piece of literature.

[1] It has been suggested that some of the traditional elements in the story were drawn from mythology or folk-lore; Winckler, *Altorient. Forschungen*, iii. pp. 66 f., *KAT.*[3], pp. 229, 438. It would be rash to deny the possibility that such was the case, but the evidence alleged is not very convincing.

[2] E.g. Geiger, *Urschrift u. Uebersetzungen*, pp. 49 ff.; Kuenen, *Religion of Isr.*, ii., p. 242 f.; Graetz, *History of the Jews*, i., p. 381 f.; Kautzsch, *Lit. of O.T.*, p. 129 f.; Bertholet, *Comment.*, p. 52 f.; Nowack, *Comment.*, p. 184 f.

§ 2. Date of the Book

While it is impossible to accept the Rabbinic tradition that "Samuel wrote his book and Judges and Ruth" (Talm. *Baba Bathra* 14 *b*), modern opinion is not entirely agreed about the date of Ruth; we can only attempt to indicate generally the period to which the Book seems to belong.

(*a*) Though the writer professes to deal with the ancient times in which the immediate ancestors of David flourished, and gives to his story a certain archaic colouring, this is only a literary device, like that which lays the scene of Job in the days of the patriarchs. For, as has been said above, the state of society which Ruth describes is very different from the conditions presupposed by the early narratives of Judges. The author looks back upon that rough and stormy age through a twilight of fancy; and in fact the very phrase "when the judges judged" (i. 1) reproduces the view of the period which was formulated by the Deuteronomic editor, and may well imply that the author was acquainted with the Book of Judges, at any rate in its Deuteronomic form. Moreover, the way in which David is brought into the story shews, quite apart from the pedigree in iv. 18—22, that he has become the king of later imagination and legend; the climax is reached when the story arrives at the name of David (iv. 17). Whether any indication of date can be found in the explanation of an old custom given in iv. 7 is not certain, for the verse may be a gloss inserted into the text (see note *in loc.*); on the other hand, the verses before and after do not form a natural sequence without it; and supposing that it comes from the author's hand, we may conclude that in his time the custom, which was well understood in the age of Deuteronomy (Deut. xxv. 9 f.), needed explanation; the great cleavage in social life caused by the exile had intervened.

(*b*) An examination of the style, i.e. of the idioms and syntax, of the Book seems to point to a comparatively late period. We must admit that the style on the whole is classical, and "palpably different not merely from that of Esther and Chronicles, but even from Nehemiah's memoirs or Jonah";

hence so good a judge as Dr Driver cannot satisfy himself that the Book is as late as the 5th cent. B.C. (*Introd.*[8], p. 454), and considers it to belong to the pre-exilic period. Certainly the writer uses expressions which occur in literature of the classical age, but these may only shew that he was familiar with the Books of Samuel and Kings : e.g.

Jehovah do so to me, and more also i. 17 ; 1 Sam. iii. 17 and ten times in Sam. and Kings.

was moved ('rang again') i. 19 ; 1 S. iv. 5, 1 K. i. 45.

hap, chance ii. 3 ; 1 S. vi. 9, xx. 26.

such a one iv. 1 ; 1 S. xxi. 2, 2 K. vi. 8.

uncover thine ear iv. 4 ; 1 S. ix. 15 and six times in Sam.

the seed which Jehovah shall give iv. 12 ; 1 S. ii. 20.

The older form of the 1st pers. pronoun (אנכי) occurs seven times, the later form (אני) twice.

Again, we find certain grammatical forms which are not decisive as to age, but occur most frequently in later books : e.g.

the impf. 2nd. fem. in ין ii. 8, 21, iii. 4, 18 ; 1 S. i. 14, Is. xlv. 10, Jer. xxxi. 22.

the perf. 2nd. fem. in תי iii. 3, 4 ; often in Jer., Ezek. xvi., Mic. iv. 13.

Other forms and expressions distinctly point to a post-exilic date : e.g.

take wives (נשא אשה for the earlier לקח אשה) i. 4 ; Ezr. ix. 2, 12, Neh. xiii. 25, 1 Chr. xxiii. 22 etc.

therefore (להן) i. 13 is pure Aramaic ; Dan. ii. 6 etc.

tarry, hope (שׂבר) i. 13 ; Ps. cxix. 166, Esth. ix. 1.

stay, be shut up (עגן) i. 13 ; elsewhere in Jewish Aramaic.

Mara i. 20 has the Aram. fem. ending (מרא = Hebr. מרה).

Almighty (*Shaddai*, not *El Shaddai*) i. 20 ; Num. xxiv. 4, 16, and often in Job.

confirm (קים) iv. 7 ; Ezek. xiii. 6, Esth. ix. 21, 27, 29, 31 f., Ps cxix. 28, 106, Dan. vi. 8 (Aram.).

Thus on the whole the language and style of Ruth appear to indicate that the Book was written after, rather than before, the exile. As we have seen, the author deliberately goes back to early times for the setting of his narrative, and it is in keeping with this that he has adopted certain phrases from the older

historical books; but now and again he could not avoid using expressions which reveal the period to which he belonged.

(*c*) A more promising clue to the date is the fact that Ruth shews no signs of the influence of the Deuteronomic school, which profoundly affected all the historical writings which have come down to us from pre-exilic times; and since the author seems to have known Judges in its Deuteronomic form, we may infer that he lived later than the age of Jeremiah. But it may be questioned whether the period just before the exile, or the early years of the struggling community which built the Second Temple, would have been favourable to the composition of such a work as Ruth, so serene in its outlook and tone of gracious piety. And if we cannot fairly detect in the Book a protest against the policy of Ezra and Nehemiah, there is no reason to suppose that it was contemporary with the latter (432 B.C. is the date of his second visit to Jerusalem). By the time that Chronicles was composed, shortly after 333 B.C., the past history of Israel was interpreted from a peculiar point of view; the legalist temper had become predominant, and Ruth is as free from the rigid spirit of legal orthodoxy as it is from the Deuteronomic pragmatism. At some time, then, in the century following Nehemiah it seems probable that the story was written; and if we are at all near the mark in this conclusion, the Book of Ruth acquires an additional interest, as proving that in an age which was becoming more and more absorbed in the ideals of legalism, the spirit of Hebrew literature was not extinct, but capable of producing a fresh and lovely work, remarkable especially for a large-hearted charity which could welcome, for her goodness, a Moabite woman into a Jewish home; so that the Book, like Jonah, may be called in the words of Dr Cheyne, "a noble record of the catholic tendency of early Judaism."

§ 3. Place of the Book in the Canon

In the Jewish Canon Ruth is placed among the *Kethûbîm* or Hagiographa (Psalms—Chronicles), and in printed Hebrew Bibles follows the Song of Songs as the second of the five *Megillôth* or Rolls, which were read at certain seasons in the

synagogue[1]. If Ruth had been known at the time when the historical books, Joshua—Kings, were collected, its account of David's ancestry, a matter of such great interest and not recorded in the older histories, would certainly have secured for it a place among them. Moreover, the historical books have all passed through the process of Deuteronomic redaction, while Ruth differs from them in this respect, and therefore, most probably, was not inserted into the older collection.

In the English Bible, as in the Septuagint and Vulgate, Ruth has been moved from the place which it holds in the Hebrew Bible, and is made to follow the Book of Judges. The reason for this transference is obvious enough ; the opening words of Ruth suggested it. Some scholars have even thought that the LXX. and Vulgate have preserved the true order, and that originally Ruth was written as an appendix to Judges ; for only by counting Judges and Ruth as one[2], and Jeremiah and Lamentations as one, can the books of the Old Testament be made to number 22, according to the reckoning of Josephus (*contra Apionem* i. 8 ; so Origen, Epiphanius, Jerome). This argument, however, cannot bear much weight when we find that Jewish tradition gives the total as 24 (Apocalypse of Ezra xiv. 44—46, Talm. *Baba B.* 14 *b*, 15 *a*) : indeed the number is counted in various ways. Finally, it is easy to see why Ruth was placed after Judges in the Greek and Latin Bibles ; but we cannot account for its position among the Hagiographa if that was not its original place in the Canon, and no hint of any other place has reached us from Jewish tradition.

[1] Song of Songs at Passover; Ruth at Pentecost; Lamentations on the 9th of Ab (the day of the destruction of Jerusalem); Ḳoheleth at Tabernacles; Esther at Purim. The arrangement of the five Megilloth is due to post-Talmudic liturgical usage. According to the Talmudic order (*Baba Bathra* 14 *b*), which is probably the most ancient, Ruth comes before the Psalms, the genealogy of David before his writings. See Ryle, *Canon of the O. T.*, pp. 232 ff., 281 f.

[2] So Jerome (*Prol. Gal.*), in agreement with Origen and Melito of Sardes : (Hebraei) in eumdem (librum Judicum) compingunt Ruth.

THE BOOK OF RUTH

AND it came to pass in the days when the judges judged, **1**
that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of
Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the [1]country of Moab,
he, and his wife, and his two sons. And the name of the **2**
man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife [2]Naomi, and

[1] Heb. *field.* [2] Heb. *Noomi.*

Ch. 1. *Ruth's devotion: she leaves her home and follows Naomi to Judah.*

1. *in the days when the judges judged*] The scene of the following story is thus placed in a distant age, which the writer pictures as a time of idyllic peace. Evidently the Book of Judges was known to him: the opening phrase is based upon the Dtc. editor's theory set forth in Jud. ii. 16 ff. For *judges* as a title see Introd. to Judges, p. xi.

a famine in the land] Targ. *the land of Israel*; more probably, the land in which Beth-lehem was situated. In ancient times it was only strong necessity which induced people to leave their homes, cf. 2 Kings viii. 1; for a foreign country meant a foreign religion (*v.* 16), 'How shall we sing Jehovah's song in a strange land?' See Am. vii. 17, Hos. ix. 3.

to sojourn] as a protected alien; cf. Jud. xvii. 7 *n.*

the country of Moab] lit. *the field of M.*, similarly in *vv.* 2, 6, 22, ii. 6, iv. 3; cf. *the field of the Philistines* 1 Sam. xxvii. 5, 7. Moab lay on the E. of the Jordan.

2. *Elimelech*] i.e. *God*, or *my God*, *is king*; an ancient name in S. Palestine, occurring in the Amarna tablets, Ilu-milki 179, 36; 151, 45, though the form *Milk-ilu* is commoner; in Phoenician we find the corresponding *Baal-milk* = 'Baal is king,' *NSI.*, p. 347. *Naomi* on the surface appears to mean *my sweetness*, a name like Hephzi-bah (2 Kings xxi. 1) expressive of the mother's joy in the new-born child; more likely it is an Aram. fem. form of *Naamān*, i.e. *sweet*, *pleasant one*, which gives a clear parallel to Marah = *bitter one* in *v.* 20; Wellhausen compares the Aram. names Oḥorān and Oḥarî, and the Arab. Nu'mân and Nu'mâ, *Composition d. Hex.*[2], p. 358 *n.* The meaning of *Maḥlon*

the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah. And they came into the country
3 of Moab, and continued there. And Elimelech Naomi's
4 husband died; and she was left, and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and
5 they dwelled there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died both of them; and the woman was left of her
6 two children and of her husband. Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread.
7 And she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way
8 to return unto the land of Judah. And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each of you to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have

and *Chilion* is not quite certain; if it is *weakening* and *pining* the names may have been chosen for their significance.

Ephrathites] Apparently Ephrath was the name of the district round Beth-lehem; cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 12, and see Gen. xxxv. 19, Mic. v. 2, Ps. cxxxii. 6.

4. *took them wives*] The idiom is a late one, 2 Chr. xi. 21, Ezr. ix. 2, 12, Neh. xiii. 25 etc.; see Introd. p. xv. It is uncertain whether the names of the two wives have any bearing upon the parts which they play in the story. The Midrash Rabbah on this Book explains that *Orpah* was so called 'because she turned her *neck* (*'oreph*) on her mother in law'; possibly the name may = 'obstinacy' (cf. *stiffnecked*, Ex. xxxii. 9 etc.). Equally doubtful is the significance of *Ruth*; if the name is shortened from *re'uth*, as it is written in Syriac, it will be the fem. of *Re'u* (Gen. xi. 18 ff.), and may mean 'friendship.' We cannot, therefore, feel sure that the writer invented the names; he may have derived them from tradition.

6. *the LORD had visited his people*] i.e. shewn a practical interest in; cf. Gen. l. 24 f. E, Ex. iii. 16, iv. 31 J; St Lk. i. 68, vii. 16. Apparently the famine lasted ten years, *v.* 4. With *giving them bread* cf. Ps. cxxxii. 15.

7. *to return*] Strictly only appropriate to Naomi, cf. i. 22 etc.; the author unconsciously reveals that he is writing from Palestine.

8. *to her mother's house*] although Ruth's father was alive, ii. 11; but the natural place for the female members of the family would be their mother's tent or house, cf. Gen. xxiv. 28, 67, Song iii. 4.

the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt] Cf. Ps. xviii. 25 'with the kind thou shewest thyself kind.' Jehovah's *kindness* was

dealt with the dead, and with me. The LORD grant you 9
that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband.
Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and
wept. And they said unto her, Nay, but we will return 10
with thee unto thy people. And Naomi said, Turn again, 11
my daughters: why will ye go with me? have I yet sons in
my womb, that they may be your husbands? Turn again, 12
my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an
husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should even have
an husband to-night, and should also bear sons; would ye 13
therefore tarry till they were grown? would ye therefore stay

specially needed by the widow, for her condition was regarded as a reproach, Is. iv. 1, liv. 4. The Book of the Covenant makes no provision for the widow (Ex. xxii. 22 is a later expansion); contrast the humanity of Deut. xxiv. 19—21, xxvii. 19.

On her marriage the wife united herself to her husband's religion; when she returned to her own people as a widow, she returned to their religion if they were foreigners, *v.* 15 f. Yet Jehovah's influence is not entirely confined to the land of Israel; Naomi can commend her daughters in law to His protection when they were back in their own land.

9. *that ye may find rest*] Cf. iii. 1; Naomi had in her mind another home for them, i.e. a second marriage. The story is told with much naturalness and delicacy.

11. *have I yet sons...that they may be your husbands?*] Alluding to the custom of levirate marriage, i.e. marriage with a brother in law (Lat. *levir*) after the husband's death. The law on the subject is given in Deut. xxv. 5—10; cf. St Mt. xxii. 24.

12. *I am too old to have an husband*] Naomi does not seriously contemplate any application of the custom alluded to: not only has she no surviving sons, but she never can have any.

If I should say etc.] Strictly, 'that I should have said, I have hope' (scil. of children). For the grammar cf. Gen. xl. 15 ('that they should have put me'), 1 Sam. xvii. 26 b.

13. *would ye therefore tarry till they were grown?*] The narrative in Gen. xxxviii. shews that the custom of levirate marriage was presupposed for the patriarchal age, but in a more primitive form than that of the modified law in Deut. xxv. According to Gen. xxxviii. a son, though not of marriageable age, is bound by a positive requirement of the divine will to marry his brother's widow, and she must remain a widow *till he be grown up* (ib. *v.* 11). The identity of the latter expression with that in the present verse seems to imply a reminiscence of the patriarchal narrative. But Naomi's imaginary sons, the offspring of an impossible second marriage, would be half-brothers to Mahlon and Chilion; and there is nothing to shew that a levirate marriage was customary in such a case. Moreover, the object of this kind of marriage

from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for [1]it grieveth
me much for your sakes, for the hand of the LORD is gone
14 forth against me. And they lifted up their voice, and wept
again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth
15 clave unto her. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is
gone back unto her people, and unto her god: return thou
16 after thy sister in law. And Ruth said, Intreat me not to
leave thee, and to return from following after thee: for
whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest,
I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God

[1] Or, *it is far more bitter for me than for you*

was to prevent the extinction of a family and the transference of the family property into the hands of strangers. As a matter of fact, however, Naomi is not thinking of this at all; she is not lamenting that her sons died without children, but that Ruth and Orpah have lost their husbands; her one anxiety is for the future welfare of her daughters in law. Hence, though her language is coloured by a reference to a well-known social institution, the reference is not exact, nor intended to be taken literally.

It is noticeable that several words in this verse point to the post-exilic date of the writer: *therefore* is represented by a pure Aramaic word, Dan. ii. 6, 9, iv. 27 [Aram. 24]; *tarry*, again in Esth. ix. 1, Ps. cxix. 166 ('hoped'); *stay*, lit. *be restrained, shut up*, only here in the O.T.; in Aramaic the pass. ptcp. is used of a wife *tied* to a husband and deserted and *prohibited* from marrying again, e.g. Talm. Jerus. *Gittin* iv. 45c.

it grieveth me much for your sakes] lit. *it is very bitter for me because of you*; for this use of the prep. (*min*=*because of*) cf. Eccl. ii. 10, Ps. xxxi. 11, cvii. 17 etc. Naomi's sympathy goes out to the young widows, and she urges them to seek happiness elsewhere. The rendering in the marg. means, 'You can go back and marry again; a worse lot is in store for me, I must remain a solitary.' The rendering of the text is to be preferred as more in accordance with Naomi's unselfish feeling.

14. *Orpah kissed her mother in law*] and, it is implied, said good-bye.

16. *unto her people, and unto her god*] i.e. Chemosh, the god of the Moabites, Num. xxi. 29, 1 Kings xi. 33. The ancient belief here receives its simplest expression: each land and people had its own Deity inseparably connected with it; outside lay the territory of another god. The Israelites, at any rate the popular religion in Israel, did not deny the divinity of the gods of the neighbouring lands, though for themselves Jehovah was the only God; cf. Jud. xi. 24, 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. So when Orpah goes back to Moab she goes back to her native god; similarly, when Ruth determines to make her home in Judah, she declares her intention of adopting the religion of her new country, *v.* 16. See *v.* 8*n*.

my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be 17
buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if aught but
death part thee and me. And when she saw that she was 18
stedfastly minded to go with her, she left speaking unto
her. So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. 19
And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem,
that all the city was moved about them, and *the women* said,
Is this Naomi? And she said unto them, Call me not 20
[1]Naomi, call me [2]Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very
bitterly with me. I went out full, and the LORD hath 21
brought me home again empty: why call ye me Naomi,
seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty

[1] That is, *Pleasant.* [2] That is, *Bitter.*

17. *will I die...be buried*] According to ancient thought union in life meant union in death and in the grave; the members of a family had a common burying-place, Gen. xlvii. 30, xlix. 29. In the underworld they lived together, as families and by nations; cf. the expression 'he was gathered to his people,' i.e. his fellow tribesmen, and see Ezek. xxxii. 17—32.

the LORD do so to me, and more also] Jehovah has already become the God of Ruth, and she uses the name of Israel's God in a solemn imprecation, which occurs only here and in the books of Samuel and Kings. When heathen utter this oath, *Elohim* is used instead of Jehovah, and the verbs are plural, 1 K. xix. 2, xx. 10. Lit. the phrase here runs 'Jehovah do so to me, and more also—(only) death shall separate me from thee'; the substance of the oath is an assertion, not a negation; similarly 1 Sam. xiv. 44, xx. 13, 1 K. ii. 23 etc. in the Hebr.

19. *all the city was moved*] *was in a stir*; so 1 Sam. iv. 5, 1 K. i. 45 ('rang again'). Beth-lehem was a small place; Naomi's return without her husband and sons could not escape notice; it aroused keen excitement, especially among the women—a graphic touch, true to life.

20. *Mara*] The word has the Aramaic, not the Hebr. fem. ending.

the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me] Almost the same words as in Job xxvii. 2. For *Almighty* the Heb. has *Shaddai*, perhaps an intentional archaism, see Gen. xlix. 25. Shaddai alone (not El Shaddai) occurs elsewhere only in poetry, e.g. Num. xxiv. 4, 16 and in Job; Naomi's words in *v.* 21 fall into poetic rhythm, as the language of emotion usually does in the O.T.

21. *hath testified against me*] i.e. hath marked His displeasure by the misfortunes which have overtaken me; for the idiom cf. Num. xxxv. 30, 1 Sam. xii. 3. The Targ. characteristically moralizes: it was on account of Naomi's sin (in migrating to a heathen country). The LXX. and Vulg., pronouncing the verb differently, render *hath humbled me*, but against the Hebr. construction. Underlying the words is the

22 hath afflicted me? So Naomi returned, and Ruth the
Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned
out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem
in the beginning of barley harvest.

2 And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty
man of [1]wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name
2 was Boaz. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let
me now go to the field, and glean among the ears of corn
after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said
3 unto her, Go, my daughter. And she went, and came and
gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to
light on the portion of the field belonging unto Boaz, who
4 was of the family of Elimelech. And, behold, Boaz came
from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD be

[1] Or, *valour*

conviction, so deeply rooted in the Hebrew mind, that all must go well with the righteous and that misfortune was a sign of Jehovah's wrath.

22. *which returned out of the country of Moab*] A superfluous expression after *Naomi returned*, and possibly an insertion from ii. 6, unless we regard it as a standing description of Ruth.

in the beginning of barley harvest] i.e. in April. Barley was the first crop to be cut, Ex. ix. 31 f., 2 Sam. xxi. 9.

Ch. ii. *The generosity of Boaz: his first meeting with Ruth.*

1. *a kinsman*] Strictly the word does not mean more than *familiar friend* 2 Kings x. 11, Prov. vii. 4.

a mighty man of wealth] **a wealthy man**, 1 Sam. ix. 1, 2 Kings xv. 20; sometimes the phrase means *a valiant man* (marg.) Jud. vi. 12, xi. 1; in iii. 11 the word for *wealth* has a moral sense.

Boaz] Cf. 1 Kings vii. 21. The derivation of the name is uncertain: possibly, 'in him is strength' (for Ruth). More probably the name is traditional, and a contraction of Ba'al-'az i.e. 'B. is strong'; cf. in Phoenician *Bomilcar* for Ba'al-melḳarth, *Salambo* for Ṣalm-ba'al etc.

2. Permission to glean in the harvest field was allowed to the poor, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow; naturally it depended on the goodwill of the owner; see Deut. xxiv. 19, Lev. xix. 9 f., xxiii. 22.

3. *her hap...Boaz*] The word for *hap* occurs in 1 Sam. vi. 9 ('a chance'), xx. 26. Throughout the story the writer intends us to share his strong belief in Providence, over-ruling unpremeditated actions and words (cf. *vv.* 12, 19 f.), and rewarding those who trust it (iii. 4, 9, 11, iv. 6, 14). 'The cosmos is a fighter for the righteous,' says the Jewish sage, Wisd. xvi. 17.

with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee.
Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the 5
reapers, Whose damsel is this? And the servant that was 6
set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish
damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of
Moab: and she said, Let me glean, I pray you, and gather 7
after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath
continued even from the morning until now, save that she
tarried a little in the house. Then said Boaz unto Ruth, 8
Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another
field, neither pass from hence, but abide here fast by my
maidens. Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, 9
and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men
that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst,
go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men
have drawn. Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself 10
to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace
in thy sight, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me,
seeing I am a stranger? And Boaz answered and said 11
unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast
done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine

4. *The LORD be with you*] Cf. Jud. vi. 12, Ps. cxxix. 8. A religious spirit governs the relations between employer and employed on this estate.

7. *save that she tarried a little in the house*] lit. 'her dwelling in the house is (but) short': not *the house* of Boaz, which is out of the question; possibly *her own house*, in which case the meaning will be 'she has but recently come to live here.' It is doubtful, however, whether the words can bear this sense; the text is probably corrupt. The LXX. reads 'and she hath not rested in the field (even) a little time'; the Vulg., 'and not even for a moment hath she returned to the house.' Something can be said for each of these emendations, but neither is quite satisfactory.

9. *after them*] i.e. the maidens *v.* 8, who followed the reapers and did the binding.

10. *take knowledge of me*] with kindly purpose, *v.* 19, Ps. cxlii. 4. A stranger had no right or claims on protection in a foreign land. The Hebr. has a subtle play on the two words *take knowledge of me* and *stranger*; the roots are distinct, but they sound alike.

11. Ruth's uncommon devotion, which induced her to leave her native land and the natural guardians of her widowhood, is one of the main features of the story.

husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother,
and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people
12 which thou knewest not heretofore. The LORD recompense
thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD, the
God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to take
13 refuge. Then she said, Let me find grace in thy sight, my
lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou
hast spoken [1]kindly unto thine handmaid, though I be not
14 as one of thine handmaidens. And at meal-time Boaz said
unto her, Come hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy
morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and
[2]they reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was suf-
15 ficed, and left thereof. And when she was risen up to glean,
Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even
16 among the sheaves, and reproach her not. And also pull
out some for her from the bundles, and leave it, and let her
17 glean, and rebuke her not. So she gleaned in the field until
even; and she beat out that she had gleaned, and it was
18 about an ephah of barley. And she took it up, and went
into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had
gleaned: and she brought forth and gave to her that she

[1] Heb. *to the heart of.* [2] Or, *he*

12. *the LORD recompense*] Cf. i. 8.

under whose wings...refuge] This beautiful idea is repeated in Ps. xxxvi. 7, lvii. 2, xci. 4; the figure is that of an eagle, Deut. xxxii. 11. May the God of Israel take care of the homeless stranger from a heathen country! The prayer was answered through the agency of him who uttered it—a fine touch, as Bertholet points out.

13. *comforted...spoken kindly unto*] The same words in Is. xl. 1, 2. See on Jud. xix. 3.

though I be not] As a stranger Ruth is not like one of his handmaidens; she has no right to expect such friendly treatment.

14. *in the vinegar*] i.e. sour wine. It is said to be still used in Palestine by the harvesters as a relish with bread.

parched corn] i.e. grain taken from the newly reaped corn and roasted in a pan, and eaten with bread or as a substitute for bread.

16. *the bundles*] Only here; in Assyr. the root (*ṣabâtu*) means 'to grasp'; in the Mishnah and Jewish Aram., 'to bind.'

17. *she beat out*] Cf. Jud. vi. 11.

an ephah] Approximately equivalent to our bushel.

18. *her mother in law saw*] A slight change of pronunciation gives a more expressive sense: *she shewed her mother in law.*

had left after she was sufficed. And her mother in law said 19
unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where
wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of
thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she
had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I
wrought to-day is Boaz. And Naomi said unto her daughter 20
in law, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his
kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said
unto her, The man is nigh of kin unto us, [1]one of our near
kinsmen. And Ruth the Moabitess said, Yea, he said unto 21
me, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have
ended all my harvest. And Naomi said unto Ruth her 22
daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out
with his maidens, and that they meet thee not in any other
field. So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean 23
unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and
she dwelt with her mother in law.

And Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, **3**
shall I not seek [2]rest for thee, that it may be well with
thee? And now is there not Boaz our kinsman, with whose 2

[1] Or, *one of them that hath the right to redeem for us* See Lev. xxv. 25.
[2] Or, *a resting place*

19. *blessed be he*] Naomi invokes a blessing on the benefactor before she knows who he is; the author delights in such dramatic fitness, cf. *v.* 12, iii. 11.

20. *one of our near kinsmen*] See marg. and note on iii. 9. Here the word *go'el* occurs for the first time in the story.

22. *in any other field*] In the field of a less pious man than Boaz a poor maiden might come to mischief; cf. *v.* 9.

23. *wheat harvest*] followed two or three weeks later.

she dwelt with] Or, with a slight change, *she returned unto*; so Vulg.

Ch. iii. *Ruth appeals to Boaz to do the kinsman's part.*

1. *seek rest*] **a resting place** marg.; see on i. 9. All arrangements for a marriage were made by the parents (cf. Jud. xiv. 2 f.); hence it was Naomi's duty to provide for Ruth's future. How this was done is told with fine simplicity.

2. *our kinsman*] See on ii. 1, a different word from *near kinsman* (*go'el*) in *v.* 9. His relationship to Elimelech, and the friendly disposition which he had shewn, led Naomi to think of Boaz in considering 'a

maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night
3 in the threshing-floor. Wash thyself therefore, and anoint
thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down
to the threshing-floor: but make not thyself known unto
the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.
4 And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark
the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and
uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee
5 what thou shalt do. And she said unto her, All that thou
6 [1]sayest I will do. And she went down unto the threshing-
floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade
7 her. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart
was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of
corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and
8 laid her down. And it came to pass at midnight, that the
man was [2]afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman
9 lay at his feet. And he said, Who art thou? And she
answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy

[1] Another reading is, *sayest unto me.* [2] Or, *startled*

resting place' for Ruth. He might be willing to do the kinsman's part; at any rate, she made up her mind to act courageously and in a spirit of faith. In her plan for a next of kin marriage Naomi's only concern is for Ruth's future; the perpetuation of the name of her dead childless son is left for Boaz to mention (iv. 5, 10).

to-night] when the wind blows (Targ.), and the weather is cool. In Palestine a wind rises from the sea at about four o'clock in the afternoon, and lasts till half an hour before sunset. For *the threshing-floor* an exposed, open spot was chosen on the side or summit of a hill; here it must have lain outside the village, and to reach it Ruth had to *go down* the hills on which Beth-lehem stands.

3. *Wash thyself...and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee*] as a bride prepares herself for marriage; see Ezek. xvi. 9 ff.

4. *And it shall be*] More accurately, *and let it be...that thou mark*; cf. 1 Sam. x. 5, 2 Sam. v. 24 in Hebr.

his feet] lit. *the place of his feet*, where they were covered against the cold of night. Outside this chapter the word occurs only in Dan. x. 6; cf. 1 Sam. xix. 13 etc., lit. *the place of his head.*

7. *at the end of the heap of corn*] To this day peasants are accustomed to sleep on the threshing-floor in the open air.

8. *and turned himself*] A reflexive form of the verb, which means 'to grasp with a twisting motion'; the verb occurs again only in Jud. xvi. 29 ('took hold of'), Job vi. 18 ('are turned aside' mg.).

skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art [1]a near kinsman.
And he said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter: 10
thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at
the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men,
whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; 11
I will do to thee all that thou sayest: for all the [2]city of my

[1] Or, *one that hath the right to redeem* Heb. *goel.*
[2] Heb. *gate.* See ch. iv. 1, 11.

9. *spread therefore thy skirt over thy handmaid*] This symbolic act denoted that the kinsman claimed the widow as his wife. Cf. Ezek. xvi. 8. The custom prevailed among the early Arabs; a good illustration is given in Ṭabarî's commentary on the Koran (Sura iv. 23, forbidding men to 'inherit women against their will'): 'In the Jâhilîya, when a man's father or brother or son died and left a widow, the dead man's heir, if he came at once and threw his garment over her, had the right to marry her under the dowry of [i.e. already paid by] her [deceased] lord, or to give her in marriage and take her dowry. But if she anticipated him and went off to her own people, then the disposal of her hand belonged to herself'; Robertson Smith, *Kinship* etc., p. 87. See also Sale's translation of the Koran (Warne & Co.), p. 56 and note.

a near kinsman] The primary meaning of the Hebr. *go'el* is 'one who enforces a claim' which has lapsed; so 'one who re-claims' or 're-vindicates.' Hence the verb is used of *redeeming* a house or field after it has been sold, or an Israelite who has been obliged to sell himself as a slave (Lev. xxv. 25 ff., 47 ff.), or something which has been vowed to Jehovah; in the expression *go'el had-dām*, 'the avenger of blood,' Deut. xix. 6, 12 etc., it denotes 'one who vindicates the rights of the murdered man;' see Driver in loc. But since a man was not as a rule able himself to *redeem* a right which had lapsed, the duty fell upon his family and more particularly upon his nearest relative; in this way *go'el* came to mean 'the next of kin.' Boaz, however, was not the nearest relative (*v.* 12), so he could not act unless the next of kin declined; nor did the Pentateuchal law require the *go'el* to marry the widow of the deceased in addition to redeeming his property, though custom sanctioned the marriage. Hence Ruth's appeal to the generosity of Boaz.

10. *thou hast shewed more kindness*] At the outset Ruth had shewn her piety towards her mother in law (ii. 11); now she shews it towards her husband's family. She has declined to seek a second marriage outside, and by her action the dead will come by his rights.

11. *I will do to thee all that thou sayest*] Note *v.* 4 'he will tell thee what thou shalt do'; but Ruth herself suggested what Boaz was to tell. The coincidence was guided by Jehovah's good providence.

all the city, lit. *gate*] In ancient times the gate was a place of resort for conversation and business and the administration of justice; cf. iv. 1, 11, Gen. xxiii. 10, xxxiv. 20, Job xxix. 7, Prov. xxxi. 23.

12 people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. And
now it is true that I am a near kinsman: howbeit there is
13 a kinsman nearer than I. Tarry this night, and it shall be
in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of
a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he
will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the
part of a kinsman to thee, as the LORD liveth: lie down
14 until the morning. And she lay at his feet until the morning:
and she rose up before one could discern another. For he
said, Let it not be known that the woman came to the
15 threshing-floor. And he said, Bring the mantle that is upon
thee, and hold it; and she held it: and he measured six
measures of barley, and laid it on her: and [1]he went into
16 the city. And when she came to her mother in law, she
said, [2]Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all
17 that the man had done to her. And she said, These six
measures of barley gave he me; for he [3]said, Go not empty

[1] Or, according to some ancient authorities, *she went*
[2] Or, *How hast thou fared* [3] Another reading is, *said to me.*

a virtuous woman] See ii. 1 *n.* and Prov. xxxi. 10. There was no unbecoming forwardness in Ruth's conduct; it is to be judged in accordance with the customs of the time.

12. *there is a kinsman nearer than I*] with a better right to do the kinsman's part. Boaz displays a nice sense of honour, and a desire to adhere strictly to the rules of social usage.

13. *Tarry this night*] as a precaution against chance perils; see Song v. 7.

14. *For he said*] i.e. to himself, *he thought*; 'if I should say' in i. 12 has the same meaning. His thought shewed consideration and good sense.

15. *the mantle*] Only again in Is. iii. 22; apparently a large wrap worn over the ordinary clothes.

six measures *of barley*] The measure to be supplied is uncertain: six *seahs*=two ephahs (i.e. bushels), which the Targ. gives, or six *ephahs*, would be too heavy to carry; hence it is suggested that six *omers* are meant=⅔ of an ephah, Ex. xvi. 36. The gift is intended for Naomi, who would have to consent to the marriage, as standing in the relation of parent to Ruth. Mr S. A. Cook points out a parallel in a Babylonian tablet (*KB.* iv. p. 187, xi. lines 1—6), where the widowed mother is approached by the intending bridegroom; *The Laws of Moses and the Code of Hammurabi*, p. 75 *n.*

16. *Who art thou*] i.e. *how art thou? how hast thou fared?* Cf. Gen. xxvii. 18.

unto thy mother in law. Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, 18
until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will
not rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

Now Boaz went up to the gate, and sat him down there: **4**
and, behold, the [1]near kinsman of whom Boaz spake came
by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit
down here. And he turned aside, and sat down. And he 2
took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down
here. And they sat down. And he said unto the near 3
kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of
Moab, selleth the parcel of land, which was our brother
Elimelech's: and I thought to [2]disclose it unto thee, saying, 4
Buy it before them that sit here, and before the elders of

[1] See ch. ii. 20. [2] Heb. *uncover thine ear.*

Ch. iv. *Ruth's marriage and descendants.*

1. *Now Boaz went up*] He had decided to redeem Elimelech's estate if the next of kin refused the obligation; this is the primary meaning of the transaction about to be described. *went up*, i.e. from the threshing-floor; cf. *go down* iii. 3, of the opposite direction. Bethlehem is situated on the summit of two knolls.

the gate] where family law was administered, Deut. xxv. 7; cf. iii. 11 *n.* Boaz knew that the Go'el would be passing out of the town in the morning.

Ho, such a one!] A form of address indicating a definite person without expressly naming him; cf. 1 Sam. xxi. 2, 2 K. vi. 8 (of a place).

2. *the elders*] possessed magisterial authority, and could be summoned to deal not only with criminal charges (Deut. xix. 12, xxi. 2—4, 1 K. xxi. 8 ff.), but with cases affecting the rights of a family (Deut. xxv. 7—9).

3. *selleth*] The tense is perfect, and implies *is resolved to sell*; the sale does not take place till *v.* 9. Cf. Gen. xxiii. 11, 13, for the same idiomatic use of the perfect. Naomi came into possession of her husband's property after his death, see *v.* 9 *n.*; this was not in accordance with Pentateuchal law, which says nothing about the inheritance of widows.

our brother] in the wider sense of member of a family or race; cf. Ex. ii. 11, Lev. xix. 17, Jud. xiv. 3 etc.

4. *disclose it*] See marg.; lit. the phrase means to draw aside the long hair covering the ear in order to whisper something; cf. 1 Sam. ix. 15, xx. 2 and elsewhere in Samuel.

them that sit here] appear to be *all the people* of *vv.* 9, 11, as distinct from *the elders.*

my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if [1] thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee.
5 And he said, I will redeem it. Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise

[1] So many ancient authorities. The printed Hebrew text has, *he will*.

If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it] It was for the Go'el to decide whether he would buy the land or allow it to pass out of the family; Lev. xxv. 25. A parallel case occurs in Jer. xxxii. 7—9: Jeremiah's cousin, wishing to sell some family property, offers it first to the prophet as next of kin; the prophet exercises his right and buys in the estate.

but if thou wilt not redeem it] See marg.; a slight correction required by the context.

5. *thou must buy it also of Ruth*] The text is certainly wrong, for it gives a misleading sense; with a small change read as in *v.* 10, **Ruth also thou must buy,** with Vulg., Pesh.; the LXX. gives both translations! Rendered strictly the whole sentence runs 'What day thou buyest...thou wilt have bought (perf.) Ruth also'; see Driver, *Tenses*, § 124.

In primitive and semi-primitive societies women have no independent rights of their own; they are treated as part of the property of the family to which they belong. Hence 'a wife who had been brought into her husband's house by contract and payment of a price to her father was not free by the death of her husband to marry again at will. The right to her hand lay with the nearest heir of the dead' (Robertson Smith, *Encycl. Bibl.*, col. 4166). This was the old law in Arabia to the time of Mohammed, and that it prevailed with some modifications among the ancient Hebrews is shewn by the narrative in Gen. xxxviii. (see on i. 13 above), by the law of levirate marriage in Deut. xxv. 5 ff., and by the present story, which implies that for the nearest kinsman to marry the widow was regarded as an act of compassion. It is important to notice that the law of Deut. xxv. 5 ff. applies only to the case of brothers living together on the same estate; if one dies without a son, the survivor is bound to marry the widow. But neither the Go'el here, nor Boaz, was a brother of Ruth's late husband; this, therefore, was not a levirate marriage. Again, in the Pentateuch (Lev. xxv.) the Go'el is not required to purchase the widow as well as the land of the dead kinsman, and it is clear that in the present case the Go'el did not consider that he was under an obligation to do so; he agrees to purchase the land (*v.* 4), but when he is told that this involves the purchase of Ruth, he withdraws his consent. At the same time we gather from his language in *v.* 6, and from the applause of the people in the gate, that custom admitted the propriety of the double purchase. It was in fact a work of charity, going beyond the

up the name of the dead upon his inheritance. And the near 6
kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine
own inheritance: take thou my right of redemption on thee;
for I cannot redeem it. Now this was *the custom* in former 7
time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning ex-
changing, for to confirm all things; a man drew off his shoe,
and gave it to his neighbour: and this was the *manner of* attes-
tation in Israel. So the near kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it 8
for thyself. And he drew off his shoe. And Boaz said unto 9

strict letter of the law but sanctioned by ancient usage, and thoroughly in keeping with the generous, kindly disposition of Boaz. The writer holds him up as an edifying example.

to raise up the name of the dead] Again the law of levirate marriage furnishes a parallel; the object of such a marriage was 'to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel' Deut. xxv. 7, as well as to prevent the estate passing out of the family. To leave behind no name in the community was considered a grave misfortune (cf. *v.* 10); it meant that the dead was deprived of the reverence and service of posterity (cf. 2 Sam. xviii. 18). This feeling may be traced back to the religious instinct which prompted the worship of ancestors.

6. *lest I mar mine own inheritance*] When the Go'el learns that if he redeems the estate he is expected to marry the widow, he takes back his promise (*v.* 4). He declares that he cannot afford to be so generous. If he were to have a son by Ruth, the child would take the name and estate of the dead, and the Go'el would have only a temporary usufruct in the property, and in the end lose it altogether (Robertson Smith l.c.).

take thou my right of redemption on thee] Since the Go'el declines, the right to redeem falls on Boaz as the next nearest kinsman.

7. *in former time in Israel*] Cf. 1 Sam. ix. 9, which begins similarly. Driver (*Introd.*[8], p. 455) thinks that the present verse is also an explanatory gloss, because it is not needed in the narrative, and has the appearance of being a later addition; see, however, the Introduction, p. xiv.

a man drew off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour] This old custom was not altogether intelligible in the writer's day, so he gives an explanation of it. When *property was transferred*, as in the present case, to take off the sandal and hand it to the person in whose favour the transfer is made, gave a symbolic attestation to the act and invested it with legal validity (Driver, *Deut.*, p. 283). The same symbolism was used on other occasions, and with varying significance. Thus, when a deceased husband's brother declined to contract a levirate marriage, the widow loosed his sandal from off his foot in token that he *renounced his right* to make her his wife, Deut. xxv. 9; cf. the Arabic form of divorce, 'she was my slipper and I have cast her off' (Robertson Smith, *Kinship* etc., p. 269); the action implied at the same time a feeling

the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was
10 Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are
11 witnesses this day. And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel

of contempt, which is probably denoted by the expression in Ps. lx. 8, cviii. 9[1]. The drawing off of the sandal also symbolized among the later Arabs the *renunciation of an oath of fealty* to a sovereign: his authority was withdrawn as the sandal from the foot (Goldziher, *Abhandl. z. Arab. Philologie*, i. p. 47).

9. *Ye are witnesses*] Cf. *v.* 11. With this appeal for confirmation cf. Josh. xxiv. 22, 1 Sam. xii. 5.

I have bought...of the hand of Naomi] More idiomatically the Hebr. perf. should be rendered in English **I buy**, i.e. I stipulate to buy; cf. the perf. in *v.* 3 *selleth*. The purchase-money was to go to Naomi; she had inherited all the family property; even Mahlon's and Chilion's land had passed to their mother, not to their widows, probably because the latter were foreigners. The right of a widow to any share in her husband's estate is not recognized in the Pentateuch[2]; but later practice allowed provision to be made (Judith viii. 7), and permitted the husband to insert a clause in the marriage settlement giving his widow the right to dwell in his house after him, and to be nourished from his wealth all the days of her widowhood; Talm. *Kethuboth* iv. 8.

10. *Moreover Ruth...have I purchased*] **do I buy**, the same word and tense as in *v.* 9. This was an additional and voluntary feature of the transaction, due to the goodwill of Boaz, and as such receives the applause and congratulations of the people.

to raise up the name of the dead] One object of the marriage was to secure the preservation of the name of the dead (see on *v.* 5); by a legal fiction the child of the marriage would be regarded as the son of Mahlon, *v.* 17 ('a son born to Naomi').

11. *like Rachel and like Leah*] Gen. xxix. 31—xxx. 24. May

[1] Cf. the story told by Burton, *Land of Midian*, II. p. 196 f.: a man who owned 2000 date-palms was asked by the leader of a band of robbers to sell them; and when he suggested that an offer should be made, the robber, taking off his sandal, exclaimed 'with this!' For the Jewish practice of *Chalitzah*, i.e. 'removal' of the shoe, see Oesterley and Box, *Rel. and Worship of the Synagogue* (1907), p. 294 f.

[2] Contrast the provision of the ancient Babylonian Code: the widow is entitled to her marriage-portion and the settlement which her husband had secured to her in writing, and is allowed to live in his dwelling place, §§ 171 and 150. In this, as in other respects, the Code of Hammurabi represents a more developed civilization than the Pentateuchal law.

and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and [1]do thou worthily in Ephrathah, and be famous in Bethlehem: and let thy house be like the house of Perez, whom 12
Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman. So Boaz took Ruth, and 13
she became his wife; and he went in unto her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son. And the 14
women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a near kinsman, and let his name be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer 15
of life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him. And Naomi took the child, and laid 16
it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And the 17

[1] Or, *get thee wealth* or *power*

Ruth become the ancestress of a famous race! Dante ranks her fourth after Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, in Paradise; *Parad.* xxxii. 10 ff. For *did build the house of Israel* cf. Deut. xxv. 9 and Gen. xvi. 2, xxx. 3 mg.

do thou worthily] lit. 'achieve might'; the phrase is sometimes rendered 'do valiantly,' e.g. Num. xxiv. 18, Ps. lx. 12, cxviii. 15 f.; but here it is used in a moral sense, cf. iii. 11. The reference is to Boaz, here and in the next sentence.

and be famous] To obtain this meaning the Hebr. text (lit. 'proclaim thou a name') must be slightly altered to 'and let thy name be proclaimed,' cf. *v.* 14. The LXX. favours this correction. How the wish was fulfilled is shewn in *v.* 17.

12. *Perez*] is mentioned because he was one of the ancestors of the house of Judah, Gen. xxxviii. 29, and, according to the genealogies, Boaz was his descendant, 1 Chr. ii. 4, 9—11.

the seed which the LORD shall give] Cf. 1 Sam. ii. 20.

14. On account of the words *this day*, Bertholet and Nowack take the *near kinsman* (*go'el*) as referring to the new-born son. It is true that the words which follow, 'let his name be famous,' apply to the child; but throughout the story the *near kinsman* is Boaz. He has done all, and more than all, that could be expected of a *go'el*; he has redeemed the property, and now (*this day*) he has secured an heir for Naomi's family.

15. *better to thee than seven sons*] Ruth has proved it by her piety towards the dead and the living. *Seven* is a round number, cf. 1 Sam. i. 8.

16. *took the child, and laid it in her bosom*] to shew that she adopted the child of Ruth as her own; cf. the phrase 'born upon the knees' Gen. xxx. 3, l. 23.

women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of [1] Jesse, the father of David.

18 Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez begat
19 Hezron; and Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Am-
20 minadab; and Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon

[1] Heb. *Ishai.*

17. *the women her neighbours*] Cf. *v.* 14 and i. 19. In St Lk. i. 58 f. the neighbours and kinsfolk propose to name the child.

There is a son born to Naomi] The child is popularly considered to belong to Naomi's family. Cf. Gen. xxx. 3, where the son of Bilhah, born on the knees of Rachel, is regarded as Rachel's child.

Obed] An abbreviated form of Obad-iah 'servant of Jah,' or of Abdi-el 'servant of El.'

the father of Jesse, the father of David] The ancestry of Jesse is not given in 1 Sam. The name (*Ishai*) is perhaps a shortened form of *Abishai.* The story of Ruth thus shews how a Moabite woman obtained an honourable place in the annals of Hebrew history; the rule laid down in Deut. xxiii. 3 [Hebr. 4] had at least one noteworthy exception[1]. From 1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4 we learn that friendly relations existed between David and the Moabites: it may not be fanciful to suppose that he would be all the more ready to entrust his parents to the care of the Moabite king because his father's grandmother was a Moabite.

With this account of the memorable issue of Ruth's marriage the Book is brought to a suitable close. The genealogy which follows may be regarded as a later addition.

18. *these are the generations...begat*] Standing formulae of P, e.g. Gen. v. 3—32, vi. 9 ff., x. 1, xi. 10 ff. etc. Though cast into P's form, the genealogy is constructed out of ancient materials. It is attached to Perez, because he is named in *v.* 12.

19. *Hezron begat Ram*] The genealogy occurs with fuller details in 1 Chr. ii. 4—15; according to *ib. vv.* 25, 27 Ram is the son of Jerahmeel and grandson of Hezron. In *ib.* iv. 1 Hezron like Perez is a son of Judah.

Amminadab] i.e. *my kinsman*, or *paternal uncle* (*ammi*), *is generous*, a proper name of an ancient type; see Gray, *Hebr. Prop. Names*, p. 44.

20. *Nahshon*] i.e. *serpent*, a name belonging to the early period. This Nahshon son of Amminadab was a prince of Judah (Num. i. 7, ii. 3, x. 14) and a contemporary of Moses and Aaron (Ex. vi. 23), according to P; here he is made the grandfather of Boaz, obviously by omitting a good many links.

[1] The Rabbis get over the difficulty by supposing that the law of Deut. xxiii. 3 applies only to men: Talm. *Jebamoth* 76 b; Sifre on Deut. l.c.

begat [1]Salmon; and Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat 21
Obed; and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David. 22

[1] Heb. *Salmah.*

Salmon] From Salmah (1 Chr. ii. 11 *Salma'*) or Salmon (St Mt. i. 4 f., St Lk. iii. 32) to Boaz is a long step, if the former is the same as 'Salma the father of Beth-lehem' 1 Chr. ii. 51. In St Mt. i. 5 Salmon's wife was Rahab, obviously an anachronism.

22. *and Jesse begat David*] The present genealogy was therefore designed to supply what 1 Sam. omitted, and to trace David's descent from Perez.

Note on the genealogy in vv. 18—22. The following points are to be noticed: (1) The genealogy consists of ten members, of which the first five, from Perez to Nahshon, cover the period from the entry of the Hebrew tribes into Egypt (Perez, Gen. xlvi. 12) to the time of Moses (Nahshon, Num. i. 7); while the last five belong to the period of the settlement in Canaan. It is obvious that the generations are not sufficient to cover this extent of time; the grandfather of Boaz cannot have been a contemporary of Moses. The genealogy, therefore, does not attempt to give a complete historical series; many links are omitted; it is artificially constructed out of traditional materials. (2) The object of the list is to connect David with the princely line of Judah. In spite of his Moabite great-grandmother, he could be shewn to come of the best Judaean stock. How this was done is explained by Wellhausen (*De Gentibus et Familiis Judaeis*, pp. 13—19) as follows: the ancestors of David were known as far as Boaz, but there memory failed; accordingly, as Beth-lehem was the native town of Jesse, it was natural to introduce Salma, 'the father of Beth-lehem' (1 Chr. ii. 51, 54); then David must be connected with the leading family of Judah which flourished in the time of Moses, and, through the marriage of Aaron, united itself with the priestly dignity (Ex. vi. 23). This accounts for Nahshon and Amminadab; these again are traced to Ram, son or grandson of Hezron, whose very name (*Ram* = 'the high one') suggests the founder of a princely line. (3) The date at which the genealogy was drawn up Wellhausen further shews to be post-exilic. For Salma is described in 1 Chr. ii. 51 as a son of Caleb, and the Calebites in ancient times belonged to the S. of Judah (Jud. i. 20); it was not until after the exile, when they found the Edomites in possession of their original seats, that they moved northwards to Beth-lehem and its neighbourhood; so that it was not until after the exile that Salma could be called 'the father of Beth-lehem.' David, however, is never connected with the Calebite district in the S. of Judah, but with the older part of Israel settled in Northern Judah, near the border of Benjamin. (4) The genealogy cannot have been framed by the author of Ruth, because he recognizes Obed as legally the son of Mahlon (iv. 5, 10); if he had drawn up the line himself he would have traced it through Mahlon and Elimelech. We may conclude, therefore, that

the genealogy 'forms no integral part of the Book, and may well have been added long after the Book itself was written in an age that was devoted to the study of pedigrees' (Driver, *Introd.*[8], pp. 455 f.). (5) The relation between this genealogy and the fuller one in 1 Chr. ii. 10—17 cannot be determined with certainty; for, as Wellhausen has shewn (l.c.), 1 Chr. ii. 10—17, 18—24 is a secondary element, and the same source from which the Chronicler derived 1 Chr. ii. 18—24 may have contained *vv.* 10—17, and it is quite possible that Ruth iv. 18—22 was also derived from it (Nowack). It is simplest to conclude, with Robertson Smith and Cheyne in *Encycl. Bibl.*, that a later writer borrowed the genealogy from 1 Chr. ii. as it stands.

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